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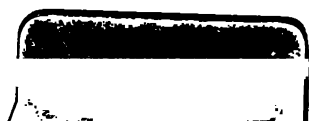
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48. 1163.







LIFT UP YOUR HEADS.

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GLIMPSES OF MESSIAH'S GLORY:

BEING

LECTURES

DELIVERED DURING LENT, 1848,

AT ST. GEORGE'S, BLOOMSBURY.

By Twelve Clergymen of the Church of England.

WITH A PREFACE,

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER DALLAS, M.A.,

RECTOR OF WIMBORNE, HANTS.



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## PREFACE.

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WITH feelings of earnest thankfulness to God, who has hitherto prospered the efforts of a few of his servants, they put forth before the world, for the sixth time, the testimony they have been permitted to give concerning the blessed prospect of Messiah's coming glory, as they have been enabled to gather it out of the holy Scriptures. They consider it to be no trifling cause for gratitude to God, that they have been privileged to lift up their voices in proclaiming the truths they have endeavoured to convey in these Lectures; and while they desire to give all the glory to Him, they rejoice in the encouragement they have received from the marked attention that has been given to the subjects treated of, and in the change which appears to be passing upon the opinions of a large portion of the Church of Christ—a change which, they would humbly venture to hope, the delivery and publication of these yearly courses of Lectures has contributed, in some degree, to promote. The voice of the



decided opposers of the subjects prominently treated of in them, is less loud in its opposition—in many cases it has been silenced altogether. Numbers who were backward in expressing the growing conviction, that in its main features the view here advocated is correct, have been led to acknowledge its truth. Careless minds have been arrested and induced to pause in serious consideration of the subject. And there are not wanting instances in which even the profane jester has become conscious of his folly, in treating with levity so awful an event as the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in his glory—an event now stealing upon the world, while the eating and drinking, the planting and the building, is going on, as in the days of Noah and of Lot, by those who are in profound ignorance of the approaching crisis.

The extraordinary rapidity with which, in the present days, the signs of the times have taken a form, remarkably resembling those which the Scriptures describe as preparatory to the Lord's return to the earth, has, no doubt, produced the alteration of opinion just referred to. We rejoice to have been permitted to form part of the instrumentality by which the minds of Christians have been drawn to consider those scriptural anticipations, in order that, as the signs have been

developed, they might be struck by the resemblance. It is evident that some such means of quickening attention to scriptural statements with reference to the prophetic announcements was necessary, that the mind might be in a position to observe the connexion of passing events with the expected "manifestation of the sons of God,"—a connexion so entirely dependant upon the inspired declarations of God's Word, that unless the details of the occurrences were pointed out as prophesied to precede the great crisis, no defined result could be anticipated, and the Church would be unable to discern the important character of God's warning to them, which may be traced in the features of the present times. There is no natural connexion between the wild outbreaks of infidel rebellion, revolutionizing the world, and the establishment of that kingdom of heaven of which the Prince of peace is to be the Supreme Head: and although "distress of nations with perplexity" might make "men's hearts fail them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth," it needed the Divine assurance, that "*Then* shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory," in order to enable Christians to feel that the perplexity of nations in distress, and the failing of men's hearts for fear,

were some of the signs by which they might mark the time when they were to "look up, and lift up their heads;" for that their redemption was drawing nigh.

We have good hope that, through the blessing of God, the Lectures, of which the present volume forms the sixth series, have not been without benefit to the Church in this respect. And this has been one of the consequences resulting from the fact, that while there are those who hold opinions totally at variance from the doctrine of the premillennial advent of our Lord, the instruction conveyed throughout these Lectures has always been based upon the system of literal interpretation by which that doctrine stands forth clearly deduced from various portions of the Divine Word. It may not, perhaps, have been systematically stated as a proposition to be proved against the arguments of opposers, but it has been uniformly assumed as the platform of truth upon which the whole instruction has been set forth. Those who hold the contrary opinion have either refused to listen to our instruction, or must, for the time, have allowed the doctrine, that the Lord Jesus will come again from heaven, *in order to establish* his kingdom upon earth, to stand as a postulate in the argument. Many who have done this in listening to us have been led to discern it

as a scriptural truth, though it has not been the primary matter treated of: and one result has been, that a large amount of scriptural detail has been brought forward in such a connexion, that as the tide of history flows on and deposits the record of events, the very counterpart of those with which the mind has become familiar in contemplating the prophetic warnings treated of in these Lectures, the prepared mind makes less resistance, at least, to the gracious whisperings of the Spirit within, which would call attention to the announcement of the Lord, "Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments."

This effect of the consideration of these details may be operating upon the minds of many who may be unconscious of the influence, and who are yet moved to a lively anticipation of great events to follow upon the recent sudden breaking-up of all the settled institutions on the Continent of Europe in its length and breadth, with the exception, indeed, of the great northern power. We would invite all such to search with renewed diligence and care into that "more sure word of prophecy," whereunto, it is said, that they would do well to take heed, "as unto a light that shineth in a dark place UNTIL the day dawn," not *after* the rising of the sun, whose glory in

His rising it foretells. (2 Peter i. 19.) We say this the more emphatically, because it has always been one of the points objected to in the system of interpretation upon which these Lectures have been given, that it leads to such a statement of particulars as seems hazardous, at the least, and in which many differences of opinion exist amongst students of the same school—differences of opinion which have been used illogically as an argument against the principle of the premillennial advent, although they regard only the details which involve no inconsistency with the general principle, on which there is no difference. The times are developing facts which, if they be signs of the Lord's coming, must be seen to correspond with certain predictions in which the detail of facts must be traceable, or they could not have the effect of giving the warning intended by the Lord for his Church. It becomes, therefore, important to point out the beneficial result of the consideration of such details of prophecy as have formed many of the subjects treated of in the Lectures; and perhaps it may be useful to justify the course thus pursued by a reference to the scriptural warrant which, however disregarded by those who differ from us on the rule of interpretation, have appeared to ourselves to make it a duty to search diligently and teach fully all that the

Holy Spirit has written in reference to the details of the events connected in any way with the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven.

It was not only from the Pharisees and the Sadducees that our Lord expected such a knowledge as would enable them to judge of the signs of the times in which the Messiah was to come in the flesh by the ordinary exercise of the power of reasoning—such as guided them in discerning the state of the weather (Matt. xvi. 1—3), he reproved those also who had learned so much of him and his doctrine as to become his disciples, for their ignorance of those details, the knowledge of which they might have possessed, and if they had possessed it they would have been preserved thereby from whatever consequences resulted from their disappointment at his unexpected death. Cleopas and his companion were not only Jews who knew the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but they had received Jesus as the Messiah. Their notions, however, of the character and circumstances of the Messiah were vague and incorrect. They knew that he was to redeem Israel, but their conception of that redemption was not such as to prepare them for its occurrence. The circumstances actually happening were so contrary to their expectations, that instead

of confirming them in the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, those events served to shake previous faith. This arose from their entire neglect of the details of prophetic announcement; and for this neglect the Lord Jesus reproved them: "O fools, and slow of heart, to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken." The connexion in which this reproof stands, evidently shows that the emphasis must be placed on the word *all*. The two disciples had not been slow to believe the prophets as regarded these general statements, that One should come who should redeem Israel; for the sadness of their disappointment arose from their anxious expectation that Jesus had been He of whom they could only have heard from the prophets; and their disappointment would have been in proportion to their belief. But having believed the prophets so far as the general doctrine of an expected Messiah was concerned, they were "slow of heart to believe *all*" that had been spoken by those prophets in detail with reference to the circumstances of his coming in the flesh.

Jesus went on to show these disciples that a due attention to the particulars of Scripture prophecy would have made them better prepared. They had recounted to Jesus the detail of facts which had just taken place, and the Lord

asked them whether they were not aware that those very things had been written as the events that would mark the Messiah's course when he should come? "Ought not the Christ (as it is in the original) to have suffered *these things*, and to enter into his glory?" and he proceeded to point out in "Moses and all the prophets," and "in all the Scriptures," the very things recorded prophetically of which the disciples had omitted to notice the details. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah's prophecy could scarcely have been passed over in this Divine exposition of Scripture—still less the twenty-second Psalm, to which Jesus had referred when on the cross. These passages contain prophetic statements of events described with singular minuteness, and had their detail been attentively observed by the disciples, the reproof of the Lord would not have been called forth.

It may be easy to comprehend that great differences of interpretation might have existed in the opinions of that band of faithful Jews who "looked for redemption in Jerusalem," in the days of expectation, when Simeon and Anna were of their number. (Luke ii. 38.) It may be conceived that by some whose hearts cherished the hope of the then coming Messiah, the declaration that "he made his grave with the wicked, and with the



rich in his death," might have been received as figuratively denoting the general characteristics of the Messiah's humiliation. Some figurative meaning might possibly have been discovered for the prophecy, "they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." It is still more easy to imagine how, amongst another class of those faithful watchers for the redemption of Israel which they anticipated from the sure word of prophecy, there might have been marked differences as to the precise events that would fulfil that which the Scripture, literally and naturally interpreted, taught them to expect. Some minds might have been unable to overcome the apparent difficulty in reconciling a division of the garments with the casting lots for them, and varieties of opinions might have arisen amongst those who, all confiding in the literal interpretation of the twenty-second Psalm, may each have had different modes of adapting the statements to the events that were likely to fulfil it. A similar difficulty might possibly arise from the combination of "the wicked" and "the rich," in the circumstances of death so plainly predicted with respect to the Messiah. It would, on the one hand, have been extremely unreasonable for their brethren who might have adverted to the figurative interpretation of these passages, to have argued

from the discrepancies between the various suggestions of different minds, that the principle was altogether erroneous, by which they gathered the simple ideas which the words of David or of Isaiah seemed to convey, because in so doing they came to different conclusions in arranging the form and manner of the events predicted. On the other hand, the very variety existing amongst those who were all equally endeavouring to work out the same principle, ought to have had the effect of quickening the observation of each and all in watching for the actual events, under the conviction that all difficulties would be taken out of the way, as the actual events filled up the picture of which the prophetic pencil had traced the outline. It might be no ground for surprise that the former class of students of prophecy should have held "sad communication" under the disappointment of not finding in Jesus him whom they expected, according to their mode of interpretation; but it might well be considered a matter of wonder that students of the latter class should fail to recognise the anticipated Messiah, where the incident of the seamless tunic, not mentioned in the prophecy, became the key to one difficulty, and proved how the garments might be parted amongst the executioners, and yet that they might be induced to cast lots for the

possession of the single vesture; and where another difficulty vanished as He who had been crucified between two wicked malefactors was buried in the tomb of the rich member of the Sanhedrim.

These minute details must have been some of the things which the Lord explained to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, since they form part of the things that the Christ "ought to have suffered" according to the Scripture, and that part especially which Cleopas and his companion had overlooked, as distinguished from the more general truths which they had received. They were minute events distinctly foretold by the prophets, and literally fulfilled at the time the Lord began the great work which is the subject of prophecy. In order to fulfil the Scripture to the letter, it was necessary that the Christ should suffer these things, and "enter into his glory." The prophetic Scriptures contain many other statements with reference to the consummation of that glory into which Jesus then *entered*. Details of events connected with the return of the Christ to the earth to establish his kingdom of glory, are much more abundant than were those relating to his first coming to enter upon the work, and we believe that they will be as literally and minutely fulfilled as were those to

which Jesus alluded in reproving the disciples for being unacquainted with them. We further believe that, however varied may be the views taken by various minds on some of these matters of detail in searching "*all* that the prophets have written" on the subject, the safest and the wisest course is to contemplate the great predicted events in every point of view, waiting for the light which will be thrown from on high as time develops circumstances. The minute details of David and Isaiah had reference to the events that occurred at the opening of the Gospel dispensation, and by these prophetic delineations became the signs by which the times of the Messiah in his humiliation might have been known just immediately upon his coming, and as far as the generation then living was concerned, only then. Whenever the Lord Jesus shall be pleased to fulfil the promise conveyed by the angelic messengers at the time of his ascension, and "shall so come in like manner as he was seen to go into heaven," the prophetic details will then have their peculiar value, all the more importantly as the distinction between a want of watchful preparation for the approach of the beginning of the dispensation, and for the approach of its close, is incalculably great. How many who, at the time of the atonement, were utterly unprepared in any way to profit by "all

that the prophets had spoken," (for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified,) were afterwards admitted into the kingdom of God, when the Spirit was poured out from on high; but when the Lord shall have accomplished the number of his elect, and hastened his kingdom, then, at his coming, "they that are ready shall go in with him to the marriage, and the door shall be shut." How vast is this distinction!

From this view of the subject has arisen the varied instruction in these series of Lectures by a few Christian ministers, who all agree in the grand principle of interpretation which bids them look for the signs of the times in which the Lord Jesus Christ shall come in his glory; however they may have differed in their views of certain details connected with that great event. The present course of Lectures is especially intended to open to the prophetic student some glimpses of Messiah's glory, with a view to lead them to look up the more watchfully; and to lift up their heads, as they observe the signs of the times, by which they may hope that their redemption draweth nigh. Some such glimpses are afforded by the view of Messiah's triumph, when he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; and when he shall achieve the great victory over

his confederate enemies. These are the subjects of the first and second Lectures in this volume. Again, his glory is exhibited in the fulfilment of his covenant love, with his espoused Bride—when he shall gather his saints for the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. This is set forth in the third and fourth Lectures. The echoing joy of all creation emancipated from the groaning condition in which it lies, in order to enjoy the visible majesty of the Lord on his return to the earth; this is opened in the fifth and sixth Lectures. The connexion in which God's ancient people—the kindred of the Saviour according to the flesh—stands in the great scheme of glory, occupies the seventh and eighth Lectures. The earth's restoration to its original blessing under a new Adam, occupies the ninth and tenth Lectures; while the practical application to be drawn from the declared character of those who partake of the kingdom of glory, together with the encouragement to be derived from its perpetuity, these close the Lectures in the present volume.

As these glimpses of Messiah's glory have been arranged and delivered in the spirit of prayer, so they are now sent forth to the Church with a prayerful desire that God may condescend to

make them the means by which many of his people may be led with greater confidence to "lift up their heads," knowing that their redemption draweth nigh.

ALEX. R. C. DALLAS.

*Winston, April, 1848.*

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## LECTURE I.

### MESSIAH'S TRIUMPHANT REIGN, THE FRUIT AND REWARD OF HIS SUFFERINGS.

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BY THE REV. C. J. GOODHART, M.A.,  
MINISTER OF ST. MARY'S CHAPEL, READING.

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PSALM XXII. 27, 28.

*“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn  
unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations  
shall worship before Thee: for the kingdom is  
the Lord's, and He is the governor among the  
nations.”*

WE are about to venture a flight this evening, which might well make an angel's eye unsteady, and his wing droop. Our subject is thus enunciated, —“The triumphant reign of the Messiah the fruit and reward of His sufferings.” May we bring to the contemplation a heart of adoring love; this is the key to unlock all these treasures of glory, and

to afford us insight, as far as it is lawful and possible, into some of the singularly precious revealed experiences of our wonderful Immanuel.

It is intended that this whole series of Lectures should draw its subjects from the Book of Psalms, that book so rich in doctrine, precept, experience, and prophecy,—prophecy of the coming kingdom. And no wonder that the last should be combined with all the rest: without it the harmony would have wanted its cadence, and its discord have been unresolved. The harp that hung on the willows of Babylon, must yet burst into song on the hill of Zion; and the Psalms of the Son of Jesse, often the expression of his children's sorrow, be hereafter also the language of their joy and triumph, when the greater Son of David shall come as their King for ever, in the name of the Lord.

We shall first briefly illustrate our subject from this wonderful book: and to begin with our text, the Psalm from which it is taken is well known, as expressing in its earlier part the experience of the Saviour as suffering for sin. In the twenty-second verse, He exchanges prayer for praise; and in the twenty-sixth and following verses, declares the precious result of His sufferings, in the salvation of them that seek God, in the subduing of His enemies, and in the turning of

the whole earth to the Lord in devout submission and pure worship.

In Psalm xvi., well known to you all, He anticipates His resurrection and ascension, His life and joy, as the result of His obedience unto death.

In Psalm xl., He begins by describing His deliverance from death, and His subsequent exaltation; and expresses His singular delight in the will of His Father, and with what readiness He came to fulfil that will by the sacrifice of Himself, seeing that no other sacrifice or burnt-offering could avail anything.

In Psalm ii., after a description of the opposition of the kings and rulers, partly fulfilled in the sufferings at His first coming, and partly to be fulfilled in the conflict at His second coming, we have the Lord's present glory in His resurrection and ascension, and His future enthronement on the hill of Sion, followed by the heathen being given Him at His request for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

In Psalm viii., we have Him made a little lower than the angels, in which humiliation He suffered and died, that He might be crowned with glory and honour, and that His reward might be the dominion of all creation.

In Psalm cx., we have no direct allusion to His



sufferings, unless we understand the last verse in this relation,—“He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up His head;” which we are not disposed to do. But in His sitting at the right hand of God, and in His investment with the Melchizedek priesthood, His previous sufferings are implied; and the whole Psalm states in glowing language the magnitude of His reward, and the glory of His triumph, evidently as the fruit of His humiliation.

In Psalm lxix., the earlier part of which is a literal prophecy of the Saviour's sufferings, we have as their result His being set up on high (ver. 29); His thanksgiving to the Father for His triumph (ver. 30, 31); the consequent joy of them that seek God (ver. 32); the praise of creation (ver. 34); and the salvation of Zion and Jerusalem for the inheritance of them that love Him (ver. 35, 36).

Psalm cxviii. is thus sketched by Horsley:—  
“The whole poem is a triumphant processional song. The scene passes at the front gate of the temple. A conqueror with his train appears before it, and demands admittance, to return thanks for deliverance and final success in an expedition of great difficulty and danger.” He then transfers the whole to heaven. We are disposed to think that it refers, first, to Messiah's triumph

at His first coming in the resurrection, and, secondly, to His final triumph at His second coming, over all His congregated enemies, when the prayer He offered in the distress of His suffering shall be answered by His exaltation in His approaching glory. Then shall the chastening of the Lord bring forth its abundant fruit, and His sore affliction its plenteous reward.

But having taken this brief view of our subject from the Book of Psalms exclusively, which the plan of these Lectures seemed to demand, let us now pass to a more full and extended consideration of this sublime and marvellous theme. And for this purpose let us—

I. *First*, take a rapid sketch of those wonderful results in which the final triumph of the Messiah will be developed and consummated. And here we should be very wanting in our exposition, if we omitted allusion to the moral victory which our coming King will achieve.

1. We may well, then, put first the *manifestation of the attributes and character of our God*. How much there is in the way of this at present! How has the evil one succeeded in throwing into the shade His glory! How little is His righteousness known! How little is His love recognised! How have the stars as they roll lost the voice of His praise to the ear, and the world in its exqui-

site arrangement failed to tell the tale of His wisdom to the eye of its too senseless occupant! How little are the steps of His providence traced in its benignity and compassion, mercy and forbearance! How is His justice questioned, His equity impugned, His wisdom not understood, His patience mistaken for indifference, His purposes misrepresented, and His promises and threatenings alike unheeded and trifled with! And if we look at His own children in reference to all these things, it is true they know much more than others; and yet how faint their impressions, how feeble their conceptions, how low and imperfect their views of all the glory of their God! And who has triumphed in all this, but the great enemy? And who shall retrieve and restore all this but our coming King? giving explicitness to what has appeared perplexed, and pouring light upon what has been obscure; but, above all, manifesting then more especially, in the consummated glory of His own person, as never shall have been witnessed before, the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2. Nor will His triumph be less evidenced *in exhibiting the perfect HARMONY of the Divine character*. Much has been done by Him already towards this end: but how does the adversary gain advantage still from exalting one perfection

at the expense of another, and magnifying apparent contrarieties in the character of God! How little is the true harmony of His attributes understood! and how does this want of intelligence lead to imputations in regard to His providence, and misapprehension as to His salvation! And after all, it is not merely mischief to man, but, infinitely more, dishonour to God, that is the object of Satan's most determined effort; and, accordingly, in the full vindication of the Divine character, on the ground of harmony and consistency, will be seen in the approaching kingdom the infinite moral glory of the Saviour's triumph. "Mercy and truth will have met together: righteousness and peace will have kissed each other: truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." (Psalm lxxxv. 10, 11.) They shall no longer be traced by footsteps few and far between: they shall be the light of the universe, and every creature abide in the consciousness and joy of their manifestation.

3. Nor can I omit here, that *the magnifying of the glory of the Holy Ghost* will be one special feature in the Saviour's triumph. The antagonism existing in our present condition is peculiarly spiritual. It is the spirit of evil that worketh in the children of disobedience: it is the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in the children of God. It is the

object of the former, in every possible way to hinder and spoil the work of the latter; and, resisted on the one hand and grieved on the other, how little is His glory manifested, or the infinite preciousness of His work acknowledged!

How will all this be reversed in the triumph of Jesus! How will He glorify Him who hath loved to bear witness to His glory! How will scope be given for the full evidence of the Spirit's divine and infinite working, in preparing a world for Christ! How will He then lift up a standard against the flood of the wicked one, and find in the Saviour's triumph in that day the unclouded manifestation of His own glory!

4. Another point which strikes us in this complete triumph, is *the manifestation of the Son's glory as the special act of the Father's love*. We cannot doubt the intensity and deep-rootedness of that hatred which Satan peculiarly bears towards the Son of the Father; nor is it possible to forget the point of the temptation, when he said to Him more than once, "If thou be the Son of God." Nor can we suppose that that temptation had not been sharpened to a point tenfold keener, when, in the hour of the power of darkness, the fearful cry was elicited, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" True, that veil was soon withdrawn, and the light soon restored; but in the

day that is coming shall the great enemy feel, amidst the rest of his agonies, *that* not the least, that the Father gives to His Son a glory no longer confined to a few, as on the mount of transfiguration, nor to a few more, as at the resurrection; but a glory that shall be yielded by earth and heaven in one burst of acclamation, when He shall bring again His first-begotten into the world, and shall say, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." There may be a more mysterious connexion than we know of between that coming moment and the creation of our world; and the first rebellion of the arch-enemy will probably find its final and bitterest disappointment in the setting up of the Son of God over a redeemed inheritance.

5. *The redemption of sinners from their sin* is another most blessed feature in the triumphant reign of the Saviour. Justice might have surrendered every rebel to punishment; but this would have involved the appearance at least of a purpose abandoned, and of defeat incurred. And he who is ever seeking the destruction of souls, would have seen righteousness magnified by the infliction of its sentence, but would still have gloried in the frustration of the creature's life and the creature's obedience. But even this boast has been wrested from him. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, the saints shall be without

spot before the throne of God. Deep as is the stain of sin, and fearful as is its corruption in this mortal life, so that an apostle could say, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing," still all shall be purged away; they shall be presented unblameable in holiness at the appearing of Jesus. It will prove to have been possible to renew the fallen creature after the image of God, to defeat the devil's purpose of eternal alienation and rebellion in the soul of man, and to exchange the bitterness of enmity and the filthiness of sin, for the fervour of holy and heartfelt love, and the righteousness and purity of unfailing obedience. In that condition of glory there shall be no partial improvement, no imperfect restitution; the triumph of holiness shall be complete, and all-pervading; there shall in nowise be found there anything that defileth.

6. A still higher step in this triumph will be *the resurrection life of the Lord's people in the outward glory of the body, corresponding to the perfected condition of the soul*. To represent Christ as a Conqueror over the last enemy, is common in the Scriptures. "He hath overcome death:" "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? . . . Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And the kingdom of our

Christ will be peculiarly the scene of this victory. Here, as far as man's eye reaches, it is on the other side. This frame breaks down with disease, and sinks under the wasting of pain and sorrow. Life ebbs away, and the form it has forsaken, failing even then to retain its consistency, passes to its appointed dwelling-place, where even the tenderest love it has left behind, shrinks from following it. The last of the creature here is earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. And is not this triumph on the part of death, and him who hath the power of death? Is there not victory here? Yes, apparently, as humbling as change can be; rebuking at once all the pride of our condition, and the refinement of our taste. But only for a season: "this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality." In that kingdom the bands of death shall be broken, and the grave shall yield its prey. "I will raise him up at the last day," said the Saviour again and again, in the season of His humiliation, knowing His own mighty power, and anticipating its final manifestation; and a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry; death shall be swallowed up in victory, and His energy put forth in its final efficacy, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. And what more



open and decisive evidence can He give in that day of the triumph of His glory, than in those bodies which have been sown in weakness being raised in power, and in His being surrounded by those saints whom He has gathered to Himself through the redemption of the body?

7. But another step farther still in His triumph, is *the renewal of creation*. Here, as we well remember, were first seen the traces of the enemy's success in his malignity. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," is a sentence that still rests on our world. "The creature itself was made subject to vanity," and the groans of creation make up most of the dismal music of our present mournful condition. But here, too, there shall be no abandonment. This world, at the creation of which the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy, shall not be cast away as a vessel marred and useless, though thousands might replace it in one instant, to gratify the spite of him who loved to spoil what he could not enjoy. Even here, too, shall be the triumph of redemption; and again shall this earth be clothed in the beauty of holiness, and send up the fragrance to our God of its pure offerings and accepted sacrifice.

Nor would we omit here, as closely connected with this head, Christ's victory over *the world*,

understanding by that term all that is opposed to God in principle and practice, as developed in the fashions, habits, and circumstances of our present condition. To use the world as the creature of God in the coming age, will be our delight; to abuse it, impossible. Disconnected from sin, it can no longer be either our snare or our idol; its current will no longer run counter to our heavenly affections, or its tone and temper jar with our spiritual mind; but it will be subjected alike in its material fabric, and in its moral principles, to its Redeemer and its King.

8. *The placing sin under the condition of atonement, on the one hand, and of judgment on the other*, will be another feature of the supreme power Christ will then manifest. What creature has ever been able to cope with that fearful disease? Mighty and wise and subtle as he is, how has the great arch-fiend failed to rid his being of this fatal poison! Who hath ever attained the mastery and the control of sin? But in that world it shall be seen that there is one who could pardon it, and be just; and punish it, and be merciful. *That* salvation will then wear the aspect of a richer love, which has availed to cleanse from a stain so deep, and to save from a misery so extreme; while the penalty inflicted on the impenitent soul will exhibit the glory of a

severer righteousness, as the result of such a propitiation being rejected, and such an atonement being despised.

9. Christ's triumph will be farther manifested in *the righteous retribution which will then be fulfilled on all His enemies*. Satan has long been at large, dreading, indeed, his imprisonment, but using to the utmost his liberty; seeking whom he may devour upon earth, and the accuser of the brethren in heaven; and the spirits who obey him, and the sinners who serve him, have followed where he has led, often without any apparent restraint, in their open and avowed rebellion. "Who is the Lord that we should obey him?" is still the language of thousands; and the world is less *indisposed* than ever to assert its independence of its Maker. But the chain of its license has a limit, and well its prince knows it. The mightier one is coming, who shall take from him all his armour wherein he trusteth, and shall divide the spoil. The vengeance that has lingered is hastening; and He to whom it belongeth shall show Himself. Then shall the wicked be cast into hell, and all the people that forget God. The Lord shall repay recompense to His enemies, and execute judgment upon all.

10. But we must not omit *the condition of*

*the inhabitants of His kingdom during His reign of glory*, as indicating, in the fullest degree, His triumph. This will be brought out in a subsequent Lecture, as will many of the other points which we have glanced at. Suffice it then to say here, that in the salvation both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, His victory shall be manifested. The stubbornness and unbelief of His ancient people shall give way for ever. Their unrelenting hatred to their Messiah shall yield to penitence and contrition: they that have unceasingly cursed His name, shall welcome it with Hosannahs! They that have persisted in saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us," shall exclaim, "This is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." Nor shall the whole Gentile world manifest less of the triumph of the Saviour. Idolatry and darkness, ignorance and superstition, all alike shall yield before Him. "In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." In the language of our text, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him."

And thus will the triumphant reign of Christ

be no partial victory, no limited dominion; not the subduing a province, however vast, or reducing to obedience even a world; but the accomplishment of one mighty purpose, comprehending all good, and blessing, and glory,—a purpose which, without danger of miscarriage or fear of failure, has taken its own time and way for the perfecting of its wondrous object; turning all into its own channel, and clothing itself with light and beauty from every earthly vicissitude; only gathering glory through all its prolonged suspension, and drawing its more complete ultimate success from its apparent hindrances and disappointments. Stability, too, and that eternal, will combine with these results. The mutability and imperfection which hitherto have seemed inherent in the creature, will be finally surmounted. Every avenue to change in a retrograde direction, will be eternally closed. Time with its decay, and transgression with its death, will alike be done away for ever; and life, in an unceasing development of delight and enjoyment, be the undeviating law of the renewed being. Then shall be manifested unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God; and the dispensation of the fulness of times go forth in its glory, in which He shall gather

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together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in Him.

It is clear, I think, then, that in every point of view the coming reign of the Messiah wears the aspect of *triumph*. It will be no progress of a monarch through dominions which have never known disturbance, but the establishment of the sway of peace and righteousness over a world of rebels and a universe of sin. Every circumstance in its condition has been a hindrance to the purpose determined on; every pulse that has beat throughout its millions of reasonable beings, has been opposed to the end in view. There were no favourable circumstances of tendency in a right direction, or disposition to co-operate with the effort for our own regeneration. When we were enemies, we were reconciled: when we were yet without strength, and sinners, Mercy's stupendous design was carried out. At every step there was a struggle; at every advance, a barrier to be broken down. In every heart the same omnipotence to be exerted; for the conversion of one soul makes that of another not a whit easier. One by one had all the elect to be gathered: step by step had the righteousness of God to be manifested, up to its final victory over sin and transgression: and even the material

world itself had to be replaced in a condition of reconciliation.

II. And how was all this to be accomplished? how so mighty a victory to be gained? This introduces us to the *second* leading division of our subject.

To Him that is almighty, what could prove impracticable or impossible? True: such a question is easily asked, and easily answered. But there is a mighty depth about its conditions, which, while it leaves the solution of it just the same, yields for the contemplation of the adoring creature an unsearchable fulness of the Divine character, and forms that detailed manifestation of Himself in which it is the purpose of Jehovah to be for ever glorified. Physical power might have been exerted in a moment to any extent: but physical power would not do here. That mighty power which formed the mind and intelligence of man, and gave him the wonderful and delicate play of the finest affections, might instantly have been brought to bear on his condition; but this again was not equal to the task of removing sin and purging away iniquity.

The highest wisdom, too, and the deepest skill were inadequate of themselves for the great emergency. *All these* were needed; and all these were exercised; but all these were not sufficient.

Moral principles were involved on both sides, on the side of the sinner and on the side of God; and neither the character of the one nor the confidence of the other could be secured, unless those principles were maintained without the shadow of a compromise or the taint of an aspersion.

This is easily seen. The state of the world was and is one of deep misery and suffering; and misrepresenting God in innumerable ways. All this is the natural and inevitable result of sin; its just retribution, its certain and eternal consequence. To cut this short is impossible; the measure of retribution is here the measure of glory; as transgression is relieved from its penalty, the law loses in its majesty. While, therefore, there is no moral power to remit the sin, no physical power can terminate the punishment. There was, however, one alternative, which the facts of the case teach us, or it had not entered into the heart of man to conceive it;—can the suffering be transferred?—can it be condensed into a limited time?—can it *then* be endured? And what is the wondrous answer to all these questions? The reply is found not any longer in what is promised and purposed, but in what is done and finished.

God provided Himself a lamb for a burnt



offering;—and the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all;—and He bare our sins in His own body on the tree;—and He said, “It is finished;—and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost.” Here was substitution, in which eternal righteousness concurred at once; here was a propitiation of infinite dignity and infinite preciousness; here was suffering, though for a short season, gathering into itself the agonies of the creature’s endless misery; here was the cross endured and the shame despised; here was sin put away and salvation effected. Yes, this was *real* suffering, this was travail of the *soul*: and while the agony and bloody sweat in the garden manifested *outwardly* by that expression of sympathy so rare in the human frame, the depth of His *inward* anguish, His doleful and bitter cry upon the cross told still more plainly the poignancy of His suffering, revealing, at the same time, its mysterious and astounding occasion in the destitution of His soul by the Father. And if we have evidence enough as to the *reality* of the suffering, we are left in no doubt as to its *adequacy*. This is a point with which we have nothing to do beyond ascertaining the judgment of God concerning it. We may reason in its favour by adducing the *intensity* of that which was endured, combined with the *infinite glory* of

Him who endured it; but while all this is undoubtedly true, it is in reality far beyond us to estimate it. *One has estimated it*, and declared it enough; and that suffices. Him has *God* raised from the dead and set at His own right hand in the heavenly places, witnessing to all the intelligent creation the boundless sufficiency of the propitiation effected.

But it is time that we trace His triumphant reign, as the *fruit* of his sufferings, a little more in detail.

1, 2. First, then, *His manifestation of God in that day, in the perfection and harmony of His attributes*, will be the especial fruit of that which He has suffered. Known for ever and exalted for ever as the Lamb that was slain, the mercy and truth, and righteousness and peace, which met and embraced each other on His cross, will from that cross draw for ever the glory of their lasting combination. The same sufferings which set free for our salvation the arms of the Divine love, invested with its girdle of majesty the Divine justice; and both the one and the other will be for ever glorified in the exaltation of Him whose sufferings sealed their reality and effected their fullest vindication. If in that coming world the righteousness of God is to be measured, how shall it be known more truly, or estimated more

exactly, than by the past suffering of Him on its behalf, who sways the sceptre and occupies the throne? And if, on the other hand, that love is to be calculated which in that day will be scattering its profusion of mercy to the very limits of our world, how shall the appreciation be rightly made by earth's blessed inhabitants without recurring to the agonies and the cross of their King? Love can never be deemed a weakness, triumphing at the expense of righteousness, for it surrendered Jesus as the sacrifice; neither can righteousness be misrepresented as unmitigated severity, for it accepted that precious offering only, that love might be eternally vindicated in its exercise.

3. The connexion of *the bestowal of the Holy Ghost in His unrestricted blessing* in the coming kingdom with the sufferings of Christ, is too evident to need much illustration. Till He had suffered and risen and ascended, He received no gifts for men. The fulness of the Father's blessing and adoption could not descend till His passion was accomplished, and His re-entrance into heaven effected; and the fuller outpouring of the Spirit, which is yet to come in the day of the glory, will be the crowning of the sufferings of Jesus, the filling up of the measure of that infinite grace in conversion, adoption, and sanc-

tification, which His death procured, and in the giving forth of which throughout our world that Spirit will then be glorified.

4. Again ; *the Father's exaltation of the Son in that day* will be the special fruit of His sufferings. As the eternal Son of the Father, God over all blessed for evermore, nothing could be added to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was : but as the Mediator of His Church, it was within His reach to gather a glory, distinct from and superadded to the other. But then this was only by *suffering*. The headship of creation could only be regained by retracing the path through which it had been lost ; and the conferring that headship once more upon one in human nature by our God and Father was only possible in case the penalty was paid and the standing of a perfect righteousness recovered. To effect this, he that undertakes it must be made a curse for us ; he must be wounded and bruised ; the Lord must lay upon him the iniquity of us all ; he must be treated as a sinner, and bear the righteous indignation of the Lord : he must suffer really and adequately. But *if he do so suffer*, the hand that hath depressed must magnify. There is no alternative here. The triumph must take effect as the necessary fruit of the humiliation ; as the righteousness

hath smitten in wrath, so must the love exalt in complacency.

5. Further: *redemption from sin* as a fruit of suffering needs, perhaps, scarcely to be dwelt upon; only that it is a point in tracing which the child of God is led on to his richest anticipations. It wears, as you will at once perceive, a twofold aspect. There is the blood presented before God, and the blood sprinkled on the conscience: and while *here* we are not without the blessed results of this precious bloodshedding, yet how will the fulness of the grace hereby be manifested in our coming condition! How will righteousness and holiness be manifested in the visible circumstances of the child of God! How will the sense of forgiven iniquity abide on his soul in all its perfect peace! Oh, how often he longs for this full consummation, knowing how much he has yet to gain from those precious sufferings! And how are the feelings of the glorified Church, under the sense of their full redemption through the blood of Jesus in the coming life, anticipated in the book of His Revelation:—"Thou art worthy . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by Thy blood." Yes, that blessed standing in peace and holiness which, amidst all the accession of visible and sensible glory in that day, will nevertheless be at the root

of all our enjoyment and delight, shall still link us with the cross, and blend our acclamations to Him who *liveth* with praises to Him who *died*. The whiteness of the saints' garments in the day of the King's espousals shall be traced to their having washed their robes, and made them white *in the blood of the Lamb*.

6. The further *gift of resurrection-life to His people*, another feature in His triumph, is distinctly connected in Scripture with the suffering of their King. Through death alone could He destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. The only life with which He could bless His Church was a life that had been redeemed. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," could only be realized in its gracious purpose by the fulfilment of that other utterance of His mercy, "I lay down my life for the sheep." If they are to stand justified in that day, of which their resurrection will be the visible declaration and seal, it can only be by the previous adjustment of all differences and the removal of all hindrances; and this again can only be by His atoning for the sin, and paying the penalty. His own justification by His resurrection from the dead must precede His bestowal of that same gift on His people; and till all had been exacted for

which He was made answerable, He could neither Himself see the path of life, nor become the resurrection and the life to them that believe.

7. Nor were the humiliation and sufferings of Jesus less necessary for *the renewal of our world and the restitution of all things*. The present condition of our creation is owing specially to the curse, and its bondage is that of corruption through sin. It passed from its goodness into its vanity, and from its order into its derangement, through the transgression of its first occupant, and was linked with man in his defilement, as the unfailing visible memorial of the fearfulness of his iniquity. Hence, as we have seen, the term "world" embodies all the principles and practices of evil. But we have already the precious exhortation and assurance of Jesus, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," and an apostle teaches us, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith;" and if we inquire into the process, another apostle thus describes it, "The world is crucified to me, and I unto the world," by the *cross of Christ*. This yields victory *now* as the earnest; in the triumph of His kingdom it will be complete and for ever.

But not only so, it is another precious consequence of redemption by His blood, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times God should

“gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him; and having made peace by the *blood of His cross*, should reconcile all things to Himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.” We look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth *righteousness*, and its glory can only bless the one and the other through a propitiation. And if the sun is yet to be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, in token of the crisis of man’s sin, that which has atoned for it shall alone prevail to restore to us a world, where the sun shall no more go down, neither the moon withdraw itself. Heaven shall again hold its light, and the earth wear her beauty; and as both were veiled in that awful moment when the agonizing Sufferer expired on the tree, so shall those very sufferings be the source of the eternal radiance and beauty with which creation shall welcome the triumph of her King. “Worthy is the LAMB that was *slain*,” shall be the acclamation of ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands; but *every* creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall take up the song, and blend with their Hallelujahs the praise of the suffering LAMB, saying, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and



power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever."

8. Again, *His triumph in connexion with sin, in the aspects of its punishment and pardon*, is also the fruit of His suffering. By this it will have been secured that sin is not punished because it could not be pardoned, neither is it pardoned because it could not be punished. They that stand in forgiveness in that day will know no secret shame, as conscious of a compromise of righteousness; and they that behold them in their condition of acceptance will not feel it any disparagement to the justice of their King. Nay, the vindication of our God in that day is anticipated already in the appeal of an inspired apostle, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." And, on the other hand, they that, not having obeyed the Gospel, are made the monuments of His fearful indignation, will feel the equity of their eternal suffering, sealed by the very fact that they have trampled under foot the blood of the Son of God, and rejected, to their own confusion, a Saviour who has suffered. To complain that there has been no mercy will be impossible,—to impeach God's love hopeless: there stands the cross, and there hung the sufferer; they would not come to

Him that they might have life ; this is their condemnation ; and the love that has been resisted and refused, sustains, in its turn, the arm or righteousness in the infliction of its deserved and necessary vengeance.

9. Further, *Christ's claim to execute judgment* is derived from the same source. The Father hath given Him authority so to do, because He is the Son of man, and the reason here given is not to be explained merely by the circumstance that He took the same nature as ours, but that, as having Himself suffered for sin, He is the person of all others to inflict vengeance for sin. Punishment in His hand can never carry the imputation of being the arbitrary infliction of one who is indifferent to its severity, from never having felt its pressure. It bears, as executed by Him, the character of a deliberate judgment and a well-weighed sentence, the extent of which He perfectly knows, and with the fearfulness of which He once placed Himself voluntarily in a condition to sympathize. And from whose lips can the denunciation of the wicked go forth with more solemn majesty before an assembled universe than from His who, in His dying agony, prayed for His murderers, and begged of His Father the forgiveness of His enemies while He was expiring amidst their mockery and scorn? He who felt no sacrifice too much to effect a pro-

pitiation for sin, thereby claims the right which cannot be resisted, of effectually putting down those who would thwart His purpose or frustrate His mercy: and if, in the fulfilling of that atonement, He yielded *His heel* to be bruised by the powers of darkness, that time of retribution will shortly come, when, from the eminence attained through the suffering, He shall bruise *their head* unto their perpetual discomfiture.

10. Once more, we ascribe His triumph, in *the universal homage that shall be rendered to Him, both by Jews and Gentiles*, to the sufferings He has endured. The lamb of the passover, as well as the other offerings of the *Jewish* ceremonial instituted in the wilderness, showed that the way to the promised land lay, so to speak, through the sacrifice of a substituted victim; and, before the Jews receive their land again as their final possession, they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn. In that day shall there be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness; and that they may be clothed in the glory, they must be cleansed in the blood. "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." And if we believe, as some do, that sacrifices will be revived, we shall have the remembrance, pre-

served in visible ordinances and offerings, of those sufferings which have formed the groundwork of Israel's salvation, and shall yield, as their fruit, Israel's glory.

And, as regards the *Gentiles*, we know who said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me;" and, again, "I lay down my life for the sheep; and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." Not for the Jewish nation only were the sufferings expedient, but "that He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." And when the whole earth shall see the salvation of our God, the words of the apostle will comprise a whole world's experience, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me."

III. But we pass to the remaining part of our subject, the triumphant reign of the Messiah the *reward* of His sufferings; and we observe:—

1st. That His triumph is His reward, as conferred upon Him, *in this light*, by the Father.

The saints were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and the Father gave Him, by eternal covenant, the Church for His own, which He loved, and for which He gave Himself. Thus was His bride provided for Him,

as His reward, and the day of His triumph shall be the day of His espousals.

To gather together in one all things in Christ through His reconciliation, is another part of the mystery of the Father's will, in return for the suffering, and it will be another feature in the Saviour's glory.

His raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; putting all things under His feet, and giving Him to be head over all things to His Church,—all this, which includes the coming glory, is the Father's reward for the suffering of death. And this is, if possible, more distinctly stated: "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The inspired Prophet announces the very same glory in the very same connexion: "Therefore

will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Again, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the same idea is dwelt upon. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became *Him*, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." And what is His reward for all this, as given Him by the Father, but the very sons whom He brings to glory, and the subjection of the world on which He endured the sufferings. Wherefore it is said, "Behold I, and the children which God hath given me;" and, again, "Thou didst set Him over the works of Thy hands;" and we know that the apostle is here speaking of "the world to come," destined to be the scene of the triumph, as this has been of the humiliation.

In the very next chapter he again speaks of Christ as *faithful* to Him that appointed Him,

and as counted worthy of glory, being a son over His own house, and afterwards he tells us that though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, hereby being made perfect. It will be a very little while, and the Son shall have His inheritance, and the ruler of the house the reward of His fidelity, for the Father shall bring again His only begotten Son into the world, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." And then will be fulfilled the promise given Him, "It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." And this followed because His judgment was with the Lord, and His work with His God, when he seemed to have been labouring in vain, and to have been spending His strength for nought.

2dly. But we pass to the consideration of this point in its more immediate connexion with the Son Himself. The triumphant reign is not only given Him by the Father as His reward: He *feels* it to be so. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, *and shall be satisfied.*"

So the apostle:—"Who for the joy that was

set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

1. Let us look at this point, first, in connexion with *the Father, and the glory of the Divine character*. Christ's sufferings have their ample reward, in this relation, in His reign of glory. The intensity of the affection which subsists between the Father and the Son it is impossible for us to estimate; slight glimpses of it are revealed in the course of our Lord's history, where we find the Father delighting to honour Him, as at His baptism, and on the mount of transfiguration; and the Son expressing to the Father the depth of His own love, and the consciousness of His Father's towards Him, as in the prayer previous to His suffering. Indeed, the one undeviating object of the Son all through was, the glory of the Father: He came to do His will, and He fulfilled it with all the unvarying intensity of the most heavenly affection. What, then, will not be the exuberant joy of His heart, when, in His glorious kingdom, He shall see the *Father* beyond all measure glorified? The fulfilling of the Father's eternal purpose, in the complete redemption of His people, will then repay His agony and compensate His anguish: for He loved and desired that purpose from ever-



lasting. The harmonizing of His Father's character, in its perfect development of glory, will then satisfy Him for all He suffered, for He has loved Him in all His glory from eternity, and He would that His creatures, reconciled and blessed, should behold that glory along with Him. The praise and honour and blessing which will be yielded to the Father in that day through Him, so that God shall be all in all, will make Him feel He underwent not a sorrow too much for such a precious consummation. Not only to have rescued His Father's character from misrepresentation, but to have brought it out in all its excellency and loveliness, and in its paternal goodness—this will be the very joy of His heart. And every note of thanksgiving which ascends to the Father—whether from the fowls of the air, or the beasts of the field, or the fishes of the sea, or the hills, or the mountains, or the trees of the forest, or the rivers of the vallies—all shall gladden His heart, as sweet in the ears of God, for the sake of Him who redeemed even *them* from the curse, and restored to them a harmony more musical than burst from them on the birth-day of their creation. And man! renewed and regenerated man! for whose soul the blood was spilt, and for the redemption of whose body death was overcome, how shall the chorus of his thanksgiving, in its

intelligent and articulate hallelujahs, be the incense which that Saviour shall still love to present unto the Father, a sweet-smelling savour through Himself, who, that He might sanctify His people by His own blood, suffered without the camp. How are the channels choked up or impaired in this evil world, wherein the praise and glory of our God should flow as a river! How will Christ then witness, to the delight of His soul, all cleared and restored! No chill upon the heart, no stammering in the tongue, in His Father's praises! No understanding dull, or eye feeble, in the apprehension of His glory! No hand unready, or foot stumbling, in the fulfilling of His commandments. God the glory of His creatures: His glory their service and their love; and *all* this the reward to Jesus of once offering Himself: "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand."

2. Again, let us mark this reward in relation to *His people*. And here we find many allusions in Scripture to the infinite delight He will receive from the sons He brings to glory.

His Church, being represented as His bride, shews the tenderness as well as the depth of His affection for her. His desire for the day of His glory, when she shall be as a bride adorned for her husband, is repeatedly adverted to. And He

gave Himself for her. This was the *only* means by which He could gain her for Himself. Strange to say, it not only needed that she should be redeemed, but she was not prepared to yield her affections to her Redeemer. He had to purchase her for Himself, and then to attach her to Himself. And by His *death* He did both; but nothing less would do it. His blood bought her for Himself, and found the way to her heart. "Ask me never so much dowry," was, as it were, the exclamation of His tenderly loving soul; and when His life was alone sufficient, He laid down His life for the sheep. And will He be disappointed? Oh no. "When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed; He shall be satisfied." Hear those precious words:—"Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Looking round, as it were, on all the beauty and loveliness of His own creation, where was there anything meet for Him? Nowhere, as it appeared; and when He found her whom His soul could love, where was she? In her sins, and in her enmity. But she was dear to Him:

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He had loved her with an everlasting love ; and she was too precious in His sight to be left in her ruin, if anything could save her. And now having redeemed the soul, and being about to change the vile body, by that mighty working whereby He shall subdue all things to Himself, He will present her to Himself on the day of His espousals, rejoicing over her for ever, the reward of His sufferings, the travail of His soul. And all the holiness, and peace, and righteousness, and joy, and truth, and love, which shall then, without a blemish or a stain, brighten and beautify every one of His saints, shall be all the more precious in His eyes, because through His poverty they have been made rich, and by His laying aside the garments of His glory, have they been clothed with the robe of salvation.

3. Further: Christ's reign will be the reward of His sufferings in reference to *creation*. By Him were all things made, and without Him was not anything made that was made : and He beheld all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And while He placed one over this creation as His representative, yet He loved still to anticipate the day when He should be, in a redeemed creation, the second Adam for its eternal sustaining—Himself its visible and present Lord. Hence, as the apostle teaches us, the

eighth Psalm remains to be fulfilled in Him. And hearing, as He does continually, the groans of creation, and seeing, as He does continually, the sorrows and sufferings of creation, how will it be one of the elements of His rich reward, when, having by His suffering put away the sin which has subjected it to the misery, He shall in that day deliver it into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and pour to its very extremities the tide of peace, clothing it again in righteousness as well as in beauty. *His mercy is over all His works*; and it will not be a sight lacking complacency to His eye when, as the fruit of His suffering, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them:"—when "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy mountain;" because peace to man by His blood, shall be peace also to the creation in which man dwelleth.

4. But the reward of His suffering shall not be less abundant from the *ingathering of Jews and Gentiles*.

The attachment of our Lord to the Jewish people and Jewish land is exceedingly remarkable; and the relations, accordingly, between Himself and that people are singularly close.

He has tended them from the first with unwearied patience and inexhaustible love. Perhaps, as a type of His eternally-chosen ones, they may possess this more than common interest. He loved them, He guided them, He punished them, He spared them; and at last, when they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, He gave them up—but not finally: there is still a remnant; and hereafter all Israel is to be saved. As if the Lord felt, “I cannot let all my love and labour be lost—nay, I will yet work for my name’s sake, and yet be glorified in Israel. My blood shall yet avail for them, and my Spirit yet turn even their heart to flesh.” And oh! how great will He feel His glory and His reward to be in the salvation of that people. All that He has endured for their sakes will only enhance the preciousness of His conquest to Him. Very striking is the language He uses concerning Zion in the glory of her recovery; and precious are the words in which He declares His sense of the fulness of His reward in her redemption to Himself: “Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” “As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” Even now the earnest language of His heart is, “For Zion’s sake I will not hold my

peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." It is in returning to Zion in mercy, that He is to get Himself glory among all the nations; it is in the purging away of their sin that He shall be specially glorified in that day. And all this reward is the result of that very crucifixion at which they taunted Him with saving others, and not being able to save Himself. Oh! how will His reward be sealed in that day when they that pierced Him shall mourn in the bitterness of deep and unfeigned repentance; and the former curses of His own people be exchanged for hosannahs, as His welcome to the throne of His father David.

Nor will His reward be limited to the Jews only: in the Gentiles will He also reap His glory. "Ask of me," said the Father, "and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And though He must first break them as a potter's vessel, yet amongst them shall His sufferings be known and His cross exalted; and they shall bring their offerings and present their worship. They also shall be sheep in His fold, over whom He will rejoice; and instead of one here and there, gathered from the wilderness,

the whole earth shall be the garden of the Lord, yielding to His heart the joy of souls redeemed by His blood, and nations walking in His righteousness.

5. One other point, in which we trace the reward of Jesus in His triumph, is *His victory over Satan*. Intensely ardent as His soul ever appeared with love for His Father's glory, there must be a delight indescribable, and a reward immeasurable, in having so completely foiled the great enemy. And we have seen already that the field of conquest was *the cross*. "Blotting out the handwriting, . . . nailing it to His *cross*; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them *in it*." Those principalities and powers had, to the eye of sense, spoiled His world; they had made those their slaves, whom he formed to be His children; they had changed the incense of holy love and devout obedience to sinful neglect and determined rebellion; they had poisoned the streams of truth and righteousness, and tenderness and love, which, flowing from man's soul in all their purity, and girdling the world which was his province, would have enriched its minutest inhabitant and remotest territory with peace and blessing.

Now, it is true, physical strength might have



shut them up in their prison-house at once, and the word of His lips have consigned them instantly to eternal darkness. But this would have been tormenting them "before the time." It would have been chaining the dragon, but leaving the prey in his teeth. And to secure, therefore, its deliverance, the fight must be fought, and the conflict sustained. Righteousness must cope with unrighteousness; truth with the insinuations of rebellion; steady unflinching obedience with the pressure of the most fearful assailings; a heart of unwavering faith with the combined menacings of the powers of darkness; yea, and death be endured, that *the devil* might be destroyed. And the cross was the crisis of his defeat; by the blood of the Lamb he hath been overcome, and shall yet be overcome; till, cast into the bottomless pit, his place on earth shall know him no more during the millennial glory, save in the significant emblem of his degradation, to be perpetuated even then in that creature, whose meat shall be dust still.

And who can tell the glory and the joy it will be to our Christ in that great day, not merely to have rescued from sin and thrall His Church and His creation, but to have lifted them from the kingdom of darkness to a more surpassing blessedness, to have made the very wrath of devils to

praise Him, and thus to have evinced His title to the throne of the universe by the victory achieved through humiliation over the prince of darkness, and the triumph secured upon the cross over the god of this world.

Brethren, this is a very feeble enumeration of these interesting points which concern our coming King ; and we can see but a little way into them ; and yet, far enough, with the light of the Divine word, to see and know that "He is satisfied." His soul has its fulness, in all these things, of joy and glory ; He weighs all the agony and all the suffering, and His complacency in what He has obtained for it is overwhelming ; and He only waits for the day when He shall make up His jewels, and wear His many crowns ; and then His joy shall be fulfilled.

We make a few remarks from the whole subject in conclusion.

1. The *moral greatness of our God* is transcendantly manifested in all this wonderful process : mark a few particulars.

That which any one might have supposed would have been effected by *power*, He hath achieved by *suffering*.

Again, the object we should naturally expect in the procedure of a Being so truly great would

be the assertion of His *absolute authority*: He has laid out the treasures of His glory in the exhibition of His *character*.

Further, treated as He was by the creatures of His hand, and the pensioners of His bounty, we might have looked for *revenge*: His method has been to effect His own solemn and eternal *vindication*.

Moreover, to do this, we should have supposed *infliction on the sinner* of fearful and enduring suffering, to have been essential and of course: He felt the only way to gain this end was to *become Himself the sufferer*.

And then, instead of executing summarily and in an instant the mighty plan, He pursues it through the patient process of painstaking endurance, setting it forth as the great object of contemplation to the universe, and giving time for a moral impression to be made on all His creatures, which should be an eternal element in their future condition.

The glory, therefore, which, so to speak, could only have been in *hell*, is now also in *heaven*; and the *salvation of the saint* hath more developed His glory than the *destruction of the sinner*. "Who shall not fear thee?" would have been the solitary utterance of hell: "God is love," is now the added shout of heaven.

2. The *pre-eminent glory of Christ* is specially to be traced in our subject.

One glance of spiritual intelligence into such a theme dissipates at once all the metaphysical and rationalistic subtleties, with which it is sought to impugn His person and excellency. Christ's cross forms the one point in the moral universe, on which God's glory and man's salvation are poised for ever; balanced in righteousness, established in truth. Oh, what an infinite testimony to His wonderful glory! It would have been an honour to Him to have gone forth invested with majesty, and attended by legions of angels, to fulfil the will of His God; but this would not have given the due *individuality* to His dignity and sufficiency and merit. On the *cross* He is *alone*; with that suffering no *angel* dare intermeddle; of the *people* there was none with Him there. All the glory of Deity rested in His hands, a trust of unutterable preciousness. If He falter, all the legions of heaven can avail Him nothing; if His merit lack one jot or tittle, the righteousness of all its hosts cannot supply it. Beside Him there is no Saviour; if He fail, all fails; if He has the glory of salvation, He has it all to Himself; for He effects it by His own suffering, He wins it alone by His own death. And this He did; and to all eternity He

shall bear the glory, the centre to God and man of all affection, through whom we love God, and in whom God loveth us.

3. Our subject suggests the *wonderful experience of Christ*. That treasure which He possesses in the special love of the Father (John x. 17), and in the Church as His portion, is all His own getting, and that with the travail of His soul. He knows, therefore, what it is worth; for He purchased it, and paid the price; and its value to Him for ever will be what it cost Him. He knows not through His omniscience merely, nor has He ascertained by weighing in another's scales, the preciousness of His jewels. He knows by that which His own soul hath tasted, the depths of the pit, and the heights of the glory; He is experimentally acquainted with the agony of the suffering, and the intensity of the joy: He reads the worth of every soul He has purchased in His own precious blood and wondrous passion, and His love shall rejoice for ever over the boundless treasure He hath gained for Himself in the Church as His inheritance.

4. Again, we are reminded of the *wonderful experience of His people* in relation to the subject before us.

The link between them and Christ is the *travail of His soul*. How precious, then, *may they feel*,

*and ought they to feel*, they are to Him! How ought they to walk under the conviction of the price at which He hath bought them, and of the love wherewith He hath loved them! Realizing their high and holy privilege, as they ought to do, of standing in so close a relation and of being thus precious to Him, how should they carry themselves with a holy and intense jealousy towards everything that would interfere with the most unreserved fellowship! With what carefulness, with what clearing of themselves, with what indignation, with what fear, with what vehement desire, with what zeal, with what revenge, should they prove themselves clear in every matter which might impugn the devotedness of their affection for Him! How should they shrink from everything which would impair the lustre or dim the light of those whom He counts His jewels, and purchased for His crown! And when from our attachment to Him the world asks, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?" how should we readily answer, "My beloved is the chief among ten thousand, yea, He is altogether lovely. His love was strong as death; many waters could not quench it. Of them which the Father gave Him did He lose none."

5. But, lastly : if *we suffer with Him*, we shall

also *reign with Him*. Our suffering will also have its reward in His kingdom.

It is here needless to say, that meritoriousness in human suffering is excluded. But, nevertheless, suffering, in some way or other, is necessary. For

It will involve, to a great extent, identity of experience with the Saviour.

It will give us a more full apprehension of salvation from sin in its surpassing extent and glory.

It is a discipline essential under our circumstances to the full training of our souls for their eternal blessedness.

Moreover, it will have its fruit and its reward.

But then it must not be wilfully inflicted penances, or arbitrary mortifications, but the resisting of evil, victory over sin, overcoming the world, mortifying our members which are upon the earth, bearing whatever cross the Lord may lay upon us, fighting the good fight of faith, yea, resisting unto blood, striving against sin. Then through grace will the fruit and reward of His sufferings be our reward also.

And let us not forget that in this conflict the sufferings of Jesus will ever yield us the most precious sympathy. He hath suffered, being tempted, He is able therefore to succour them

that are tempted. As Jesus, therefore, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate, let us go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. So, when He shall receive the fruit and reward of His sufferings in His everlasting kingdom, shall we be with Him where He is, that we may behold His glory; and, casting our crowns before His throne, join the triumphant chorus of the gathered Church in the fulness of His joy and theirs, then for ever consummated, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us unto God by His blood, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing!" Amen.



## LECTURE II.

### THE VICTORY OF CHRIST OVER THE CONFEDERATE NATIONS.

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#### PSALM II. 4—6.

*“ He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh : the  
Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall  
he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them  
in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king  
upon my holy hill of Zion.”*

ONE of the most important preparations of mind for receiving instruction from the pages of Scripture is an abiding recollection, that He who has written them for our learning is the Eternal God himself, who saw the end in the beginning. As we stand in the midst of the events that are unfolded by time, we can see only those which

happen in our day, while we gather up the records of those which took place in the generations past; but He who has made a written revelation to man forecast his view along the course of time; and taking in the great results of his predetermined counsels, he has recorded such events as in his wisdom he has been pleased to reveal,—sometimes with the detail that belongs to the actual sight, and sometimes with the combinedness of view which conveys but a general notion.

But in all God's revelations to man, the subject matter has had reference to the manifestation of His own character, of which unassisted man could know so little; together with an exhibition of fallen nature, of which unassisted man has so false a notion. Hence it results, that whatever may be the particular branch of the subject revealed, there is, in the manner of conveying information, a fitness in each part to adapt itself to the general condition of man in his relation to God; so that those who are the actors in the various scenes of human life may apply numberless passages, only in their general sense to the passing circumstances; and too many sincere readers of the Word of God are satisfied to confine themselves to such a mode of reading,

alarmed lest they might err in venturing to look upon the matters of detail, as with the eye of one present, although the language employed might seem to warrant such a view. By this means the mind is satisfied with the benefit to be derived from the present exhortations of Scripture, without being sufficiently armed against the forthcoming trials; of which we might be warned by a continual remembrance that, in stating the prospective history of his people, the Lord has prophetically revealed facts as facts, not merely as illustrative suggestions in connexion with doctrine. And although the course of history may convey, a thousand times repeated, the *shadows* of prophetic declarations, yet He who wrote those declarations indicated, in each case, the *substance* of which the constant operation of the same corrupt principle produced frequent foreshadowings under a similarity of form.

Let us take the second Psalm as a means of observing the distinction now pointed out. It has a *general* meaning, applicable at all times; but it was written with a *special* meaning, prophetic of circumstances which are to take place at one particular time. It speaks of the corruption of human nature; and of the triumphant energy of the Divine will, of which multitudes

of instances have characterized the history of the Church. But it tells, also, of the final crisis, when that human nature shall arrive at the climax of its corruption; and when that Divine will shall manifestly obtain the victory, and subdue it, in the maturity of its combined opposition.

In one sense, the heathen have ever been raging, and the people, or nations, have ever been meditating a vain thing, being without God in the world. In their pride of heart and their thirst for dominion, the kings of the earth, its conquerors, and its despots, have constantly set themselves in array, with confederate cunning, against the unseen God of gods, and in opposition to the manifestation of his will and his wisdom, in the person of his Anointed One—the Christ. The great object of their counsel has ever been to escape from the restraint of the Divine law, and to refuse submission to those requirements of God which would curtail the exercise of their own supremacy. The whole course of history will show how vain have been the endeavours of men to control the will of the Almighty. Sitting in the highest heavens, he has poured contempt upon the wisest schemes of the most powerful monarchs. The Lord has had them in derision upon unnumbered occa-

sions; he has spoken to them in his wrath by his providential dealings, and vexed them with evident tokens of his sore displeasure. The exaltation of the Christ, the Head of the Church, has still proceeded, in spite of the hindrances of tyrants. The Gospel has been published far and wide, by which has been proclaimed the supreme Divinity of Jesus, who has taken the manhood into God. His glorious cause has prospered, while he has exercised his great office of Mediator before the throne; and his Church upon earth have offered the constant incense of their supplications, that Christ's name may be known on earth,—his saving health among all nations. Once and again have the victories of the Gospel been attended with the evident discomfiture of its enemies; and every such occasion has given new impulse to the exhortation, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." \*

But these precious words of God have a defined meaning, over and above that with which

\* Psalm ii. 10—12.

Christians are frequently satisfied. They may be considered, moreover, as but a condensed index, pointing to other passages in the Word of God, which fill up with full details the sketch of the prophetic facts, to describe which the words of the Psalmist were shaped. It is this precise and defined meaning to which I am permitted to call your attention upon the present occasion. And I earnestly pray that the Spirit, whose blessed office it is to guide the Lord's people into all necessary truth, may vouchsafe His presence with us in power at this time, and enable us to consider what He has written, with such humility and such wisdom as may advance our knowledge, and promote the glory of Christ, in us and through us. May God, for Christ's sake, give to each of us the Holy Spirit!

As the language of the authorized version of the second Psalm is so well known, and has already been referred to, it may be useful to quicken our attention to the sense of the words, by reading the translation of an eminent prelate, which, without altering the meaning, suggests powerful thoughts by the manner in which some parts of the original are rendered.

By an attentive consideration of the psalm, we shall find that it foretels a state of circumstances in which a tumultuous assembly of ungodly

nations occurs, the rulers of which organize a distinct opposition to Christ; determining to cast off the restraints which the revelations of the Almighty impose upon the pride of human nature.

PSALM II. 1—3.

1. "To what purpose do the heathen confederate,  
And the nations meditate a vain thing?

Or,

And the nations mutter angrily in vain?

2. The kings of the earth set themselves in array,  
And the statesmen sit in council together  
Against Jehovah, and against his Anointed One.

3. 'Let us break off their fetters,  
And cast away from us their twisted cord.'

We then find a statement of the scorn with which the Almighty regards this confederacy, and the manifestation of his wrath against them, declared in the most expressive language:—

Verses 4, 5, 9.

4. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh,  
The Lord shall make scorn at them.

5. Then shall he speak against them in his wrath,  
And in his burning anger he shall strike them with dismay.
9. Thou shalt rule them with a sceptre of iron;  
Thou shalt break them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

Besides this, we find a statement of the result of the struggle, and the glorious victory that the Lord will achieve, including the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, on the throne of David in Zion, and extending over all mankind, carried on under the proclamation of His supreme divinity, as the only begotten Son of God:—

Verses 6—8.

6. "Yet will I anoint my King  
Upon my holy hill of Zion.
7. I will publish the decree of God. Jehovah saith unto me,  
My son art thou; I this day have begotten thee.
8. Demand of me; for I appoint the heathen thine inheritance,  
And the extremities of the earth thy fast-possession."

A fourth division of the Psalm is devoted to a



practical exhortation, founded upon the warning notice thus given :—

Verses 10—12.

10. "Now, therefore, O ye kings, grow wise ;  
Be taught, O ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve the Jehovah  
With fear, and rejoice with diffidence.
12. Kiss the Son  
Lest he be angry, and ye perish from the  
way ;  
For, within a little, shall his wrath blaze  
forth :  
Blessed is every one who taketh shelter  
under him."

Each of these divisions will suggest a separate branch of the great subject before us.

We will consider,

I. The confederacy of the latter days ; its gathering.

II. The preparation of the Lord for the crisis to which this confederacy is to ripen.

III. The victory of the Lord ; its glory and its consequences.

IV. The practical application which results from the knowledge of these events, prophetically declared in the Word of God.

It must be very evident, from the nature of

this subject, that each branch of it must be treated only as the declarations of Scripture will warrant. They relate wholly to matters prophetically anticipated. Whatever God has been pleased to reveal, that we may confidently receive as certain. To reject any portion of it is want of faith; to modify and alter any part by the inferences of argument would be contrary to sound reasoning; inasmuch as we can come to no certain result by deductive reasoning without a knowledge of the *whole* matter in hand; and, as we have no such knowledge, it would be unwise to attempt such deductions. The utmost range of our subject can only include a search into the holy Word of God, in order to discover what he has revealed concerning this confederacy. But, as within this range we may discover things, to which our ordinary notions may be unsuited, it becomes us to be careful, lest, by re-casting in the mould of our own minds, the thoughts which God has been pleased plainly to express, we should so alter their shape and figure, as to turn His truth into our own error, and lose the benefit which was intended in the prophetic warning.

I. The confederacy of the latter days; its gathering.

God's toleration of man's rebellion, is one of

those mysteries which will awaken our joyful wonder, when it ceases to be mysterious, at the open manifestation of God's glory in Christ. He tolerated until "every imagination of the thought of man's heart was only evil continually," and then he destroyed the family of man from off the earth, re-peopling it by a new stock from one who had found "grace in his sight." One portion of that new family heaped sin upon sin, until "the cry of it" came up unto God, and he rained fire from heaven upon them. These, however, were but as shadowy illustrations of the character of that wrath which is yet to be outpoured upon the rebellious family of man, when his pride shall have matured to the point referred to in our Psalm. And the circumstances resulting from the hardness of man's heart upon those former occasions are spoken of in Scripture, as types of the condition of mankind in that future crisis. "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from

heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." \*

The evil that was tolerated in spite of those lesser manifestations of wrath will be endured no longer, when their greater antitype shall have been fulfilled. And it may be necessary here to suggest to your minds, that which appears to be the occasion of this Divine patience; in order that, by recollecting the final object, we may be the better able to comprehend the relative position of those great events by which that object is at length to be attained.

In creating the earth for man, and in making it "very good" for the being who, "very good" also, was made to have dominion over it, it is not the will of God that his purpose should be reversed, or necessarily altered, by an opposing power from without. He distinctly declares: "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain: he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." †

By the introduction of sin, and the consequent corruption of man's nature, that surpassing won-

\* Luke xvii. 26—30.

† Isaiah xlv. 18.

der, the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, became necessary, in order to that "redemption of the world," and "restitution of all things," which are included in the marvels wrought by the Divine humiliation. The earth shall be restored,—the family of man shall have dominion over it,—Jehovah hath said it, and there is none else.

But He who has taken the manhood everlastingly into God has determined, that a compensating glory shall accompany the everlasting flesh of the Saviour, when the Son himself shall be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. He has appointed a long, long list of the children of the fallen Adam, who shall be gathered out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and being endowed with that spiritual body which shall be like unto Christ's glorious body, shall be raised above all previously created beings: passing through the nature of angels upwards, with him who ascended on high, they shall be made higher than the angels, to be crowned with glory and honour, on his throne who "was made for a little while lower than the angels, that, by the grace of God, he should taste death for every man."

It is the gathering of these elect saints, to inherit light and glory around the throne of Christ, which has occupied the time of God's

patience with man. A time during which the arch-enemy exercises all his cunning, to seize the only opportunity of ensnaring into the place prepared for the devil and his angels, those victims of mankind, who will be foreigners in that abode, for which they have chosen to be naturalized by sin. The continuing of the day of grace, for the gathering of the elect saints, affords this only opportunity; and when God shall have accomplished the number of his elect, the day of grace will be past, and the hardened hearts of those who resisted its heavenly power will fit the unhappy beings to "rage, and imagine the vain thing, that they can break the bands of Christ asunder, and cast away his cords from them." We have several indications in Scripture of the manner in which the process of preparation for this hardened state will be carried on. Without attempting to begin too far off from the climax of rebellion, either in circumstance or in time, we may take some few passages of Scripture, which may lead us to search for others descriptive of the state of the world at the time when the great confederacy against the Lord shall take its more defined form. Among the more general statements, we may read:—"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing

spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."\* "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."† "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delu-

\* 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

† 2 Tim. iii. 1—5.

sion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”\*

From these general statements we may turn to the Apocalypse; and without entering into any criticism that might occupy too much time, we find a passage which distinctly states one feature of preparation for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.”†

Whatever else may be proved by this passage, it is clear that, whenever the great day of God Almighty is at hand, in the course of which Jesus

\* 2 Thess. ii. 7—12.

† Rev. xvi. 13—17.



will come as a thief, three wonder-working spirits will be widely spread abroad—spirits of devils, differently characterized indeed, but tending evidently to produce that clashing war of opinions which will inflame men's passions, and excite them especially to resist with violent hatred the claims of the supremacy of the one true God and his Christ.

By referring to another portion of the vision of the Apocalypse we find, that in the fearful preparation for the great day of the wrath of Almighty God, the Divine Providence is emblematically set forth by the appearance of four angels. To these is given the charge to hurt the earth ; and yet they are commanded to restrain for a season the winds that would do the work for which they are especially appointed. A period for sealing the servants of God in their foreheads is allowed ; so that, whatever may be the special character of the servants there intended, at least we may learn with certainty, that after a period of peace, when the passions of men are scarcely controlled, and the storms of war are providentially restrained, at length the blast shall go forth,—the opening of a contest that is to end in the great victory of the Lord Jesus Christ over the confederate powers of rebellious man. So may it be said, that “the day of the Lord so cometh as a

thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (Rev. vii. 1—3; 1 Thess. v. 1—3.)

In the writings of the prophets there are several statements which describe, very particularly, the gathering of the confederate armies amongst the people thus prepared by the three clashing principles, to combine in opposing Him against whom the point of each of the principles is directed. The most striking account is that which is found in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of the Prophet Ezekiel. This portion of Scripture supplies us with details which tend to cast great clearness upon many less minute passages in each of the other prophets. As the key, therefore, to the whole subject of the future course of events, we must consider some parts of those chapters. The connexion in which the passage stands is, beyond all doubt, conclusive as to its position in prophetic anticipation. It has reference to events which have never yet taken place, since the prophet lived in the period of the Babylonish captivity; and its context places it at the time when the people of Israel shall be once again brought into their chartered land—first a few of them merely inhabiting Jerusalem and its sur-

rounding country, in preparation for the complete gathering which is to take place after the victory. "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." \*

The word Gog stands for the great ruler of the whole confederacy, and the land of his rule is called Magog. He is described as the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; but it is important to observe, that the word translated "prince," though it is an appellative noun, meaning a prince,—yet it is also a proper name, for which it is allowed, upon the best grounds of criticism, to be taken in this passage. The word is *Ros*, and the translation should therefore be, "the chief, or prince, of Ros, of Meshech, and of Tubal." Without detaining you to enter upon minute criticism, it may be sufficient to point out, that it has been the opinion of many commentators, that these describe the Russian, Muscovite, and Tobolsk countries, an opinion which is considerably strengthened by the writing of the original Hebrew words without points. It will not be necessary to consider the names of the other

\* Ezekiel xxxviii. 1—3.

countries mentioned ; since it is, at all events, clear, that the sovereign commander of the great confederacy will be joined by various nations from different parts. “ And I will turn thee back ; and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords : Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them ; all of them with shield and helmet : Gomer, and all his bands ; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands : and many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited : in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste : but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.” \*

By these Scriptures may be seen, the larger explanation which may be found in the Word of

\* Ezekiel xxxviii. 4—9.

God to confirm the three first verses of the second Psalm. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

We will proceed now to the second point.

II. The preparation of the Lord for the crisis to which this confederacy is to ripen.

In the language of the Psalm, Jehovah says, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion;" and this opens before the mind wonderful thoughts concerning those materials of his glory, which are to surround the Christ in the day of his victory, the preparing of which has prolonged his patience during the dispensation of the Gospel in which we live. There are many explanations in the Scripture of the manner in which these are to be gathered—a point of heart-thrilling interest to those whose hope it is that they are the individual objects of this gracious mercy.

The Lord Jesus has provided us with a guide, which enables us to begin with the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and to trace onwards, by consecutive steps, the events by which we shall arrive at the great consummation.

It affords us, indeed, no knowledge of the day and the hour when the events of great interest are to happen; but it supplies us with indications of the nature of one event after the other, by which we may be enabled to make each the sign of preparation for the next.

In prophetically describing the destruction of Jerusalem then forthcoming, the Lord Jesus declared that that fearful judgment would open the days of vengeance, when all things written against the Jews would be fulfilled. There was to be great distress in the land of Judea—the Jews were to fall by the edge of the sword—and to be led away captive into all nations; events which were fulfilled to the letter, in all the length and breadth of their awfulness. Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles—heathen nations were to be the masters of it, and to continue so for a period, during which the Lord Jesus would send forth His Spirit to gather out of every kindred and people the individuals who were to possess the inheritance of the saints in light. But when that period shall be accomplished—the fulness of the Gentiles having come in—the terrible tribulation and dispersion of the Jews will be at least so far ameliorated, that the city of Jerusalem (however small may be the limits of the country around it) will be given into the

hands of such of the Jewish people ("the tents of Judah first," as the prophet Zechariah informs us) as may associate together with a desire to return to their native land, and possess at least a supremacy in the city. Jerusalem will then cease to be trodden down of the Gentiles. \*

"For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." \*

No sooner will the tribulation upon the Jews be so far passed away, that the feet of Jewish rulers shall tread the sacred soil, than what St. Matthew calls the "sign of the Son of Man," † will appear in the heavens. Jesus, who was seen to ascend up to heaven in a cloud, will so come in like manner as he was seen to go; and the description of the result, as regards the true Church of God, given in the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, supplies us with the events next immediately to follow.

\* Luke xxi. 22—24.

† Matt. xxiv. 30.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”\*

In order to understand this passage aright, it is necessary to observe the importance of the word “with,” in the connexion in which it stands. The Apostle is assuring the Thessalonian Christians, that they will not fail to meet those Christian friends who have been taken away from them by death, and have slept in Jesus. He tells them that God will bring them again *with* Jesus; and he explains how they are to be gathered *to* him first, in order that they

\* 1 Thess. iv. 13—18.



may come *with* him afterwards. Jesus himself, who is in the highest heavens, will descend towards the earth; and, pausing over it, will issue the powerful command which the bodies in the graves shall hear and obey. Those who have died in Christ will first be called into the joy of their Lord; then, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," a similar change will take place upon the bodies of those who are still living in Christ—the quick; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality;"—passing through the air, each and every one will be caught up to meet the Lord in the cloud, and so the saints will ever be *with* him.

We have no scripture from which we may gather any clear understanding of the point at which this great unsalting of the earth will take place, in relation to the contemporaneous events by which the preparation is being made for the assembling of the great confederacy. It may be when the three spirits of devils have done little or have done much in the preparation for gathering "the kings of the earth and of the whole world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

Having followed the guide of Scripture until it has placed the saints safely with the Lord, on that cloud in which he is to pause in his descent

upon the earth, in order to receive them, and to continue there while the child is young, hardened by the opposition of the Gentile hearts, and left without restraint to the full maturity of evil, as before, and proceed to put those mischiefs into action which will rapidly draw the result. To the consideration of this we now proceed.

### III. The Victory of the Lord :— its consequences.

We have already seen, that the Lord's own advance towards the Jews will be such a withdrawal of his protection, that some portion of the dispersed Jews will be considered like a dawning of the day, and promises to that people. Jewish rule will be in Jerusalem ; and the little remnant of Judah, which shall have entered into a temporary possession (so to speak) shall remain there, probably under the protection of treaties, without attempting any defences, as their comparative insignificance will render vain. But all dependance on treaties will cease when the restraint of God is withdrawn from man ; and the few but affluent Jews will occupy an apparently unprotected position,

cupidity of the godless rulers of the Infidel world,—Gog, the prince of Ros, Meshech, and Tubal, with all his host, acting under the infatuation with which their hardened sinfulness will have blinded them.

“Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all

of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes."\*

Hear the account given by another prophet (Zechariah) of that same closing campaign of the great final war.

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley: and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the

\* Ezek. xxxviii. 10—16.

mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."\*

Here, once again, we find the risen saints, after having seen how the Lord is to gather them, that they may be *with* Him, and that He may come *with* them. Now, in the midst of the battle, Jesus appears, surrounded by his glorious company in the spiritual bodies, given to them at the first resurrection.

The prophet Zechariah had previously explained the manner in which God will prepare the hearts of the gathered remnant of the Jews for the manifestation of himself to their sight. Just at that point when half the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem shall have been spared in the sacking of the city, the Lord "will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem;" and He says, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

\* Zech. xiv. 1—5.

In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart."\*

And while their hearts are smitten with that deep contrition, which nothing but the Spirit of grace can produce, Jesus shall go forth accompanied by his Court of Saints; and thus is described the effect of his wrath:—

"Thus saith the Lord God; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath, have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and

\* Zech. xii. 9—14.

the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence; and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord."\*

The terrible description of the state of those armies, in which every man's sword shall be against his brother, and the Lord will plead against them with pestilence and with blood, is still more affectingly described in the passage of Zechariah's prophecy, "And this shall be the plague where-with the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and

\* Ezek. xxxviii. 17—23.

their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour."\* The hand that is raised to strike a neighbour will wither ere it falls: the eyes that flash the fire of rage will melt in the socket: the tongue that fain would utter a curse will fail in the mouth.

Read also the closing description of the word of God concerning this day of terrible destruction to the Lord's enemies—the day of vengeance of our God. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself: And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called, The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a

\* Zech. xiv. 12, 13.



rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”\*

I must still point out to you one more passage,

\* Rev. xix. 11—21.

which contains, as it were, the shout of victory, and conveys the closing consequences of that day's great battle :—

“ Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God ; this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years : so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests ; for they shall burn the weapons with fire : and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea : and it shall stop the noses of the passengers : and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude : and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them ; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing

through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land. And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. And I will set up my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the

house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward."\*

I dare not trust myself, at this advanced hour, with even an attempt to range over the prophetic prospect of glory that follows this destruction of the confederate enemies of the Lord. One single passage will suffice to set your minds forward into the search for such descriptions as the Lord has spread abundantly over all his prophetic revelations. Take the closing condensed statement of the prophet Isaiah, as an index by which to seek for the details of the subsequent events:—"It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them. Of those that escape I will send unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them for priests

\* Ezek. xxxix. 8—22.

and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." \*

Thus shall be verified in all its fulness the reality of that statement in the second Psalm,—  
"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." †

Thus have we pursued the plan marked out,—

\* Isaiah lxi. 18—24.

† Psalm ii. 4—9.

rapidly, indeed, and briefly, but as time would permit us. In bringing you to this point, I have selected but one line of scriptural statement, in order to prevent that confusion in the mind which might so easily arise from the multitude of surprising thoughts teeming in every passage that might be brought to bear upon the subject. Following a single line of simple statement, I have introduced only those main and prominent events by which the Lord's purposes may be traced, through his prophetic announcements; and I leave for the occupation of your private hours the deeply interesting task of searching for the many passages in all the other prophecies, which, while they confirm and establish the view I have given you of the main course of events, supply, at the same time, great variety of particulars by which this sketch may be filled up. And having thus endeavoured to trace the road by which your private searchings may be led, we come at last to,

IV. The practical application which results from the knowledge of these events prophetically declared in the word of God.

One of the internal evidences of Divine wisdom in the Scriptures is that which may be gathered from the manner in which every part, even the statements of prophecy, are made to supply an application to practical holiness for all generations,

however distant they may be from the event declared. And the mode, in which the application of the second Psalm is given, is an instance of this wisdom. In all time the exhortation which closes this psalm, must have applied with powerful effect, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." \* But the exhortation receives immense accumulation of power, as the fulfilment of the prophecy assumes its definite shape. In order to obtain the benefit of this power, we will briefly sum up the steps in the progress hitherto proved from the word of God.

We have seen, that, in the fulfilment of prophetic history, the latter times are to be characterized amongst the worldly, by a marked deepening of those features of pride, rebellion, self-indulgence, and sinful daring in matters relating to God, which are the result of the natural corruption of man.

We have seen, that, for the ripening of this corruption, opinions and principles are to be widely disseminated by the agency of evil spirits,

\* Psalm ii. 10—12.

in the immediate preparation for the crisis. Opinions and principles characterized by diabolical daring in infidelity, as coming out of the mouth of that old dragon, the devil—by infatuated claims to despotic authority, as coming out of the mouth of the beast, which symbolized imperial Rome—and by the cunning devices of a forgery of the semblance of religion, as coming out of the mouth of the false prophet. Opinions and principles clashing in their development relative to their position one with another, combining in their operation relative to their enmity against the true God and His Christ.

We have seen, on the other hand, that, during the continuance of God's wrath upon the people of Israel, testified by their long dispersion among their enemies, the Spirit of Jesus is gathering his elect saints, that "such as shall be saved may be added to the Church daily." And the measure of the time for this gathering of the Church is the same as the measure of the time of this dispersion of the Jews; so that they both terminate simultaneously.

We have seen, that, for the final sealing of the Lord's servants, the completing both of the day of grace and of light for the Church, and of the day of wrath and darkness for the Jews, a period of providential peace is to take place, maintained



in defiance of the impetuosity of man, by those very agents of God's dealings—those ministers of His that do his pleasure—who yet bear the commission afterwards to hurt the earth, over which they restrained for a season the devastating storms.

We have seen, that this last pause of mercy, for the purposes of the Lord's glory, must be simultaneous with that last spreading of opinions, for the purposes of gathering the nations to the great day of the battle of Almighty God. These may be said to be the several processes for the mustering of the great armies which are to join battle in the day of Christ's victory.

We have seen the indications by which the word of God directs our attention northward, to find the chief of that vast confederacy in the head of the tribes of Ros, Meshech, and Tubal.

These main points have been taken as links in the chain of prophetic anticipations. And it is for us, who call upon the name of Christ, and make our profession of being his saints, to direct our eye especially to that point in the prospect, which tells of the calling forth of the Lord's army, by the sound of the trumpet from heaven, and the voice that shall raise them into the cloud, to be ever with Him, who, being the Captain of their salvation, shall marshal them for that

victory, in which he shall attain even “the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.” And as this is the special point of deepest interest, so it becomes us to be specially diligent in searching for every guiding sign that may warn of its approach. The most diligent search will give no certain token of the day and the hour when the Son of man shall appear. The current of three great streams of events converge to that point:—events that relate to the saints who shall be with the Lord in their spiritual bodies;—events that relate to the Jews, who shall be at Jerusalem in unchanged bodies, and there receive the outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplications;—events that relate to the unbelieving world, whose infidelity shall develope in that great confederacy which shall receive the outpouring of the Lord’s wrath in the great day of the battle of Almighty God.

Now the first of these three great currents, relating to the people of God, must arrive at that point, at which the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in,—at which the number of God’s elect saints shall be accomplished. But this great stream may be said to have a secret and silent flow, bearing onwards spiritual events hidden from carnal eyes;—a torrent indeed fast flowing;

but flowing like the subterranean waters that pass under our feet, to break forth in splendid magnificence and power a little way off it may be. And as we have no means of knowing how near this outburst may be, by tracing the stream itself, we must look to the other currents that are more evident in their progress.

The current of the world's affairs can scarcely supply us with necessary evidence of a distinct nature; for it has not pleased the Lord to state any special event, connected with the gathering of the confederacy, of so defined a character as may serve as a landmark by which to take the bearings of that great event—the appearance of the sign of the Son of man pausing in the cloud over the earth to receive his saints.

We have no means of knowing with certainty, how much the hardness of the world's heart will have accumulated before the unsalting of the earth by the separation of the saints from it, and how much of that hardness is to accumulate after that event; and the very undefinedness of Scripture on this point tends to suggest the idea, that from the moment that the three unclean spirits go forth into the world, the beginning of the crisis bids us look with instant expectation, for the mustering of the Lord's army in heaven.

One point, however, peeps forth in the Lord's

prophetic statements, by which we may discover a defined event, before which the saints cannot be called from the earth,—after which they cannot be detained on it. The city of Jerusalem is to be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled; and then, immediately after that closing point of Jewish tribulation, they shall see the “sign of the Son of man in heaven.” “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”\*

Yes! brethren! when these things *begin* to come to pass, then we may lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. *If* we were to perceive the clashing struggles of the three principles that prepare the war of opinions;—*If* we were to find their effect upon the minds of men so strong as to excite them into action;—*If* we

\* Luke xxi. 25—28.

were to mark the progress of a general peace, commenced by quelling the Infidel power through the strong arm of force, and prolonged through unnatural restraints upon the heavings of the general desire for war;—*If* we were to see its termination imminent, and hear the universal surprise that it has lasted so long;—*If* the breaking forth of some sudden gust of that wind so long held by the angels were to give token, that the time for the execution of their commission to hurt the earth was at hand;—*If* but the rulers of the Northern nations, who long had men at their command, were to possess the wealth by which they might work that human machinery for imperial ambition;—then, brethren! with what earnestness we might lift up our heads, sure, from the clustering combination of so many signs, that our redemption indeed was drawing nigh. Neither need the absence of the one defined token give occasion to the sluggard heart of man to put off the preparation for the coming cloud; for the prophet Isaiah, in giving the account of those glorious particulars which I have stated to you already, proclaims in the very same passage, “A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain

came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God."\*

The Almighty is He that can overthrow kingdoms in a day, and give birth to nations in an hour; and when, aroused by that concurrence of signs already referred to, we begin to look around,—*if* we see the servants of the Lord begin to take pleasure in the stones of Jerusalem, and favour the dust thereof,—*if* we perceive the hearts of the children of Abraham, that were once so hard, melting under the beams of mercy from Jehovah,—*if* we perceive Jerusalem restored, as it were, from her neglected position in the wilderness, and come forth, in the face of mankind, an object of interest again,—*if* we can trace her political position as one, to which the rulers of the kingdoms of the world might attach an importance, that might lead them to give her to her wealthy children, and make her, as a city, free,—then, brethren! may we lift up our heads, for

\* Isaiah lxvi. 6—9.

the defined point immediately betokening the sign of the Son of man in heaven may be,—might be,—I could almost say, *must be*,—instantly at hand.

Have I said, *IF*? Brethren, I implore you, go forth, and see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears, and judge with the mind of the Spirit, how far that *if* was needful. Hasten, I implore you, to be wise. Hasten to give the Son that kiss of peace, by which the anger of the Almighty being turned away, ye may possess that peace with God through which ye may enter into the joy of our Lord, in the day of His glorious victory over the confederate armies.

*“ I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say.”*

## LECTURE III.

### TRIUMPH OF THE KING, AND HIS GLORIOUS ESPOUSALS.

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#### PSALM XLV. 1.

*“ My heart is inditing a good matter : I speak of  
the things which I have made touching the  
king : my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.”*

WHEN addressing you, my beloved friends and brethren, in a former course of Lectures, I mentioned that there were some subjects which the ministers of Christ were at times called to set before a congregation, which, to do justice to them, required the mind of an angel, and the voice of a seraph. If such was the case regarding the subject upon which your beloved minister then requested me to address you, namely, the Halle-



lujahs of the redeemed upon the downfall of Babylon,—these powers are needful in a far higher degree upon the present occasion ; for, high and holy as was the theme I then attempted, still more sublime, and infinitely more glorious, is our present subject. That discourse was occupied in setting forth the praises of those redeemed saints who were once men of like passions with ourselves ; but the subject now to be unfolded is “a song of loves,” and this not of that impassioned kind which, in ordinary language, has obtained such a name :—it is a sacred ode, which God the Holy Ghost inspired the sweet Psalmist of Israel to write when predicting the triumph, and more especially the glorious espousals, of Messiah,—a subject so exalted, so suited to elevate the soul, and so accordant to the minds of that “innumerable company of angels who stand around the throne,” that I fully believe there is not one of the heavenly host who would not delight to take up the theme, and set it before you, and that in such notes as angels sing.

Who, then, is sufficient for these things ? And yet, who that had any love to his Saviour, or who that was at all sensible of the high and blessed privilege of speaking forth His praise, would not, if the opportunity were presented to him, suffer pain, did he decline such an office, and that more

especially when he reflected that, however weak and incompetent he was in himself, he was permitted to entreat the aid of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, even Him who is the glorifier of the Lord Jesus, and who, our Lord has promised, shall take of the things which are his, and show them to his disciples?

Let me then, my Christian friends, entreat your earnest prayers for his Divine aid, that the Comforter may indeed be with us! May He who brooded upon the face of the waters, now spread his almighty wings over this assembly, and enable us so to speak and hear that God may be glorified, the Lord Jesus Christ his beloved Son honoured, and all present edified, for the Lord's sake.

The inspired writer, as if fully sensible of the greatness of his subject, commences this "song of loves" thus abruptly, "My heart is inditing a good matter;" or, as it is in the margin, and as the original reads, "My heart is boiling or bubbling up with my subject," is so filled by the Holy Spirit, that it cannot contain itself, but must proclaim the delightful theme. "I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer," or of one who, taught by the Holy Spirit, is fully instructed in his glorious subject.

With this brief introduction, seeing that the

first thing to be done in such an ode was to make known the person of the Bridegroom, addressing himself to the king, he says, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever."

Here we have a short, but a very delightful description of the person of Messiah; for that He is the king of whom the Psalmist writes, is so plain, that to prove it at any length would be a useless task; for of what king but of Messiah, even our blessed Saviour, could it be said, as it is at the sixth verse, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre?" for none of the kings of this world have an eternal throne, neither have any of them a straight sceptre, or a government so completely ordered by the rules of truth and righteousness, that there is not the least deviation from this perfect standard: but, blessed be His name, our ever to be adored Lord has an eternal throne upon which, through endless ages, he shall sit, ruling in righteousness, and executing judgment. It is addressing himself to Him that the Psalmist says, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever."

Here the Psalmist appears to be speaking more

particularly of the human nature of Christ, and when saying, "He is fairer than the children of men," he is not referring to His outward form, but to the inward purity of His soul, or to those various graces which shine forth in Him with such ineffable beauty. He is indeed "fairer than the children of men;" for they having been "conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity," partake of the fallen nature of their first parents. But He is the seed of the Virgin, to whom the angel said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." He is "the holy child Jesus," the Lamb of God without blemish and without spot, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

Let us for a few moments, my beloved Christian friends, refresh our spirits by fixing the eye of faith upon His exquisite beauty.

In that precious book which is called the "Song of Songs," and which specially refers to the same subject as this song of loves, our Lord takes this title, "I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys," as if by thus comparing Himself to those chief flowers of the garden, each eminent for its beauty, but of a different kind, our Lord would say to his Church, that as no one

emblem was sufficient to make him known, every excellence being combined in him,—the fragrant rose and the majestic lily, were both required, and even their united beauties could give but a very faint description of Him who is “the chiefest of ten thousand, and altogether “lovely.”

If we regard the Saviour when, like the opening bud of the rose, He is seen as a babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and yet in this lowly state receiving the homage of the wise men who came from far to worship him—what opposite excellencies do we behold! We see Him who was in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, condescending from his high and lofty state, and clothing himself with our nature, becoming “bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.” Surely, here He appears fairer than the children of men, for while they are continually seeking for high things, “He made Himself of no reputation; and though “in the form of God, He thought it no robbery “to be equal with God,” he was seen as the carpenter’s son, born in a stable, and cradled in a manger.

Again, view this Rose of Sharon as made manifest when beginning to blossom, or, without a figure, when our blessed Lord, yet but twelve years of age, was found in the Temple sitting with

the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions, such was the wisdom He then displayed that all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers, and yet such was his meek submission, that though he desired, at that early age, to be "about his Father's business," still He went down to Nazareth with Joseph and Mary, and was subject unto them—thus setting an example to every youth of filial obedience, honouring his mother in his boyhood by ready obedience, as upon the cross he honoured her by providing a home for her, commending her to the disciple he loved, who from that hour took her to his own home.

Or still further, behold Messiah as He appears when coming forth from that obscurity in which He had voluntarily dwelt till he was thirty years of age. He then submitted to be baptized in Jordan by His forerunner John—a part of His condescension so pleasing to His Heavenly Father, that a voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;"—while the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him.

Surely we cannot behold Him thus "fulfilling all righteousness," without confessing, "He is fairer than the children of men;" a confession we should as readily make, did we follow Him into

the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, or trace His steps when, having overcome Satan, "He went about doing good," feeding the hungry, cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, feet to the lame, comfort to the afflicted, drying up the widows' tears, and raising Lazarus from the grave; at once strengthening the faith, and delighting the hearts of His sorrowful sisters.

If possible, we should still more readily unite with the Psalmist in saying, "He is fairer than the children of men," when He appears, as Messiah is here described, having grace upon His lips. For when He read in the synagogue that beautiful portion from the prophet Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord;" "the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him, and all bare witness to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth."

Full of grace, indeed, were His lips; so much so, that the servant of the high priest, though sent to bear witness against Him, returned with

this remarkable confession, "Never man spake like this man." O, my beloved friends, what grace was upon His lips, when, at the very moment that His enemies were piercing His hands and feet upon the cross, He cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" or when, in reply to the prayer of the penitent malefactor, He said, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" or still more so, when, having been declared to be the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead, instead of taking vengeance upon his crucifiers, He commands "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM," thus making the very place where He had endured inexpressible sufferings, to be the spot where His Gospel should be first preached, and the glad tidings of a full, free, and everlasting salvation first made known.

Surely grace was then upon His lips. How gracious a Saviour do we therefore possess! Has any individual come to this house, burdened with sin, or depressed with sorrow? O, look to Him who is full of grace. He invites you to come, and seems, in effect, to say—

Why should an anxious load  
Press down your weary mind?



Haste to your Saviour's loving breast,  
And sweet refreshment find.

His goodness stands approv'd,  
And reigns from day to day ;  
Come drop your sorrows at his feet,  
And bear a song away.

But I should detain you too long, did I enlarge upon this branch of the subject. I will only remind you, therefore, that it is from His being fairer than the children of men, and having grace upon his lips, that God has "blessed him for ever"—so blessed Him, that He has "given Him a name" "which is above every name: that at the name of" "Jesus every knee should bow, of things in" "heaven, and things in earth;" "and hath set him" "at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far" "above all principality, and power, and might," "and dominion;" "angels, and authorities, and" "powers being made subject unto Him."

Having attempted, however inefficiently, to unfold the description given in this song of loves, of the person of the King ;

I come, secondly, to consider the inspired Psalmist's prophetic declaration of Messiah's triumph. This is contained in the following verses :  
"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty,  
"with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy

“majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and  
“meekness, and righteousness; and thy right  
“hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine  
“arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s  
“enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.”

This portion of the Psalm may comprise the whole period, from the time that our blessed Lord, having ascended up on high, and sat down at the right hand of God, poured forth the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, until the day of His appearing. For from that time to the present He has been fulfilling the description given of Him in Rev. vi. 2, a description very similar to the Psalmist: “And I saw, and behold a white horse: “and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown “was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” For during the whole of the present dispensation, our blessed Saviour has, by His preached Gospel, been subduing his enemies. But until this time, and as will be the case till we reach the time of the end, his conquests have been only over individuals. As is stated in the Acts of the Apostles,\* “He has “visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a “people for his name.” But if you refer to the 5th verse of the Psalm, you will see that it relates

\* Acts xv. 14.

to those times in which His conquests will be far more extensive. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby THE PEOPLE fall under thee." In the Hebrew, the word we translate "people" is in the plural number,—“whereby the peoples,” or “the nations, fall under thee;” evidently predicting that period spoken of by the prophets, when “the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee,” and “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” For it is at this period that the marriage of the Lamb shall take place; after the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord, or after He has taken to Himself His great power and reigns, or when “the great voice is heard from heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.”\*

At that period our Lord will exercise His power in two different ways; one of which is, by converting His enemies into friends by His word, brought to the heart by the Holy Spirit; the other mode, by the entire destruction of His wilful foes, treading them in His anger, and trampling

\* See Rev. xi. and xix.

them in his fury, as described by the Prophet Isaiah in his sixty-third chapter, and by St. John, in the Book of the Revelations.\*

It is to the former of these modes that the inspired writer appears to refer in this psalm. For such a conquest as may change enemies into friends by the power of His word, is in perfect accordance with "a song of loves," while the calling upon Him to overwhelm His foes by His almighty arm, would be quite incongruous with the subject. The prayer of the inspired Psalmist is, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because, or in the cause, of truth, and meekness, and righteousness,"—terms which are peculiarly descriptive of the Gospel, which contains a bright display of the truth of God, and of the meekness and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such an interpretation, also, will be in perfect harmony with other parts of Scripture; as in the Book of Revelation, where it is said of our Lord, that "out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword," a name given to the Word of God, which is "the sword of the Spirit," and which is thus described in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any

\* Rev. xiv. and xix.

“two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing  
“asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and  
“marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and  
“intents of the heart.”

In the forty-ninth chapter of the Prophet Isaiah, Messiah thus addresses the Gentiles:—  
“Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye  
“people, from far; The Lord hath made my  
“mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of  
“his hand hath he hid me, and made me a  
“polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me.”

Let us, then, my friends, endeavour to realize our blessed Lord going forth in His glory and His majesty, with these irresistible weapons,—His Word, in one view, sharper than a two-edged sword, dividing asunder the soul and spirit; and in another, like the thrilling shafts of eloquence; or, if it be lawful to use such an expression, those “love arrows,” which, almost before they can be felt, penetrate the heart.

Thus accoutred, the Captain of our salvation takes the field, and, riding forward as a warrior, ready armed, He meets His enemies, or those who have hitherto refused to bow to His sceptre, or to hearken to the glad tidings of His Gospel. Of these He finds some stout-hearted, and far from righteousness,—men, like the jailor of Philippi, naturally cruel and ferocious; or, like

the Pharisees of old, high-minded, and unwilling to submit to the righteousness of God.

Against these enemies He draws out that two-edged sword, which cuts asunder the soul and spirit. He lays on them such a stroke as this,—“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.” “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all:” or this,—“He that hateth his brother is a murderer:” or this,—“I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned:” or this,—“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.”

These cuts of His sharp sword, wielded by His right hand, or by the Holy Spirit, frequently termed in Scripture “the hand of the Lord,” as it is by His almighty agency that the Lord performs His works, “teach him terrible things;” or, as it may be more properly rendered, “wonderful things.” For, how wonderful is the change wrought in a sinner’s heart, when “the sword of the Spirit” enters the soul! We see the mighty change in the trembling jailor, when

falling at the apostle's feet, he called out, "Men and brethren, What shall I do to be saved?" when they answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" the lion became a lamb: the cruel jailor washed the stripes of his prisoners, set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.

Thus does Messiah conquer some of His enemies by His two-edged sword, fastening such deep convictions in their minds, as cannot be resisted. They become like His very crucifiers, who, pricked to the heart by Peter's discourse, renounced their former opposition, and, yielding to His sceptre, were baptized in His name.

There are others of Messiah's enemies who are of a different character. They more resemble Lydia, whose heart "the Lord opened, to attend to the things spoken of Paul." These are the foes of whom the Psalmist says, "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee." For with such persons the Lord uses His polished shafts, or those irresistible love arrows, which at once penetrate the soul; such a dart, for example, as this,—"Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not

"cause mine anger to fall upon you : for I am  
 "merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep  
 "anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine ini-  
 "quity, that thou hast transgressed against the  
 "Lord thy God. Turn, O backsliding children ;  
 "for I am married unto you." Or such a dart  
 as this,—“ Learn of me, for I am meek and  
 "lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest for  
 "your souls." Or such a one as this,—“ Come  
 "unto me, all ye that are weary and are heavy  
 "laden ; and I will give you rest." " For the  
 "Son of man is come to seek and to save that  
 "which is lost : " and, " Him that cometh unto  
 "me, I will in nowise cast out." Or such a  
 dart as this,—“ Let not your heart be troubled :  
 "ye believe in God, believe also in me ; for I  
 "am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd  
 "layeth down his life for the sheep. And other  
 "sheep I have which are not of this fold ; them  
 "also I must bring, and these shall be ONE fold  
 "under ONE Shepherd ; " all in perfect union,  
 for " there is no difference between the Jew and  
 "the Greek : for the same Lord over all is rich unto  
 "all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call  
 "upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Thus vanquished, either by His sharp two-  
 edged sword, or by the polished shaft taken from  
 His quiver, Messiah converts enemies into friends.



They become like Saul the persecutor, when he was met, on his way to Damascus, by the Lord Jesus : they fall at His feet, and become His willing servants, in the day of His power.

How delightful it is, my Christian friends, to behold the Captain of our salvation thus triumphing ! The Prophet Isaiah, animated as he generally is, appears to glow with still greater fervour at this glorious sight. Speaking of the nations, who, in the latter day, shall bow to the sceptre of Messiah, he says, “ Lift up thine eyes round about thee, and see : all they gather themselves together, they come to thee : thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee ; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. All they from Sheba shall come ; they shall bring gold and incense, and shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.”

Are there any present, my beloved friends, who, ere the latter-day contest actually begins, are desirous to yield themselves to the Lord ? It may be, that in His gracious providence the Lord has brought into this large assembly, some who have hitherto opposed His cause. Should there be any such, let them regard the Lord Jesus riding forth in His glory and His majesty ;

let them see Him drawing out His two-edged sword, and aiming at you individually such a stroke as this,—“Repent, and turn yourselves  
 “from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall  
 “not be your ruin. Cast away from you all  
 “your transgressions whereby ye have trans-  
 “gressed, and make you a new heart and a new  
 “spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?  
 “I have no pleasure in the death of him that  
 “dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore, turn  
 “yourselves, and live ye.”

Will not these heavy strokes of His sword convince you of your error, and bring to your remembrance the words addressed by our Lord to Saul the persecutor,—“It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”

Or, it may be that there may be present this evening some of a more gentle spirit,—some amiable persons, who are beginning to inquire into these all-important subjects; who have not as yet really surrendered their hearts to the Lord, or yielded themselves to His mild and gracious sceptre. Are you such a character? Behold Him who goes forth conquering and to conquer, bending His bow, and aiming this arrow at your heart:—“Behold, I stand at the door,  
 “and knock: if any man hear my voice, and  
 “open the door, I will come in, and sup with

“him, and he with me.” Or this,—“Ho, every  
“one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and  
“he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and  
“eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without  
“money and without price.”

O, that the Spirit of God would exercise His Almighty power, and give you a heart to receive this gracious invitation! Man, my dear friends, can speak to the ear; but the Lord, the Spirit, can speak to the heart. O, that He would thus speak to you; that this may be the night that you may yield your soul to God, and say with His willing people, “Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God!”

The Psalmist having thus described Messiah’s triumph over His enemies, then, with that prophetic eye which sees future events with the same clearness as if they were actually present, breaks forth in praise of the Redeemer as a victorious King. For, having conquered all His enemies, changing many of them into friends by the power of His Word, and completely subduing the remainder by treading them under his feet, as in the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, “the kingdoms of  
“this world are now become the kingdom of our  
“Lord, and of His Christ.”

Of this glad event, the Psalmist thus speaks in

## AND HIS GLORIOUS

the sixth and seventh verses  
"God, is for ever and ever  
"kingdom is a right  
"righteousness and hates  
"God, thy God, hath an  
"of gladness above thy fe

Upon this part of the  
and yet to be occupied for  
is enough to say, that Me  
His throne in full posse  
all is now ready for co  
espousals.

This crowning act forms  
verses of the Psalm, to v  
your attention. O! that  
may now be with us, so  
promise, "They that wa  
renew their strength," th  
course may be as when th  
upon the altar, and the  
supplied broke forth in br

The inspired writer ha  
ance with his subject, co  
ode by describing the per  
now makes us acquainted v  
"AN thy garments smel  
"and cassia, out of the  
"they have made thee gla

In this verse there appears to be a reference to eastern customs, by which it was usual for kings, when celebrating their marriages, to be dressed in splendid robes, and to anoint their garments with costly perfumes. They were also accustomed to adorn their palaces with ivory.\* To these eastern customs reference may be made; but I cannot but consider that the sweet Psalmist of Israel alludes rather to those costly robes of glory and beauty in which the High Priest came forth from the Holy of Holies to bless the people, and also to that precious ointment which was poured upon Aaron's head, and which descended to the skirts of his garments. For the Spirit of prophecy has declared, that Messiah was to sit, not only as a King, but "as a Priest, upon His throne;" and this was to be an eternal priesthood, in which the Saviour would be "a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

This union of the offices of King and Priest in the person of the Redeemer, adds much to the glory of His espousals. For not only may his bride view Him as her Lord, but as that Great High Priest who appears in heaven as "the Lamb that was slain," and "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Let us, then, for a little while, advert to the

\* See 1 Kings xxii. 39; Amos vi. 4.

High Priest's garments of glory and beauty, and to that precious ointment which was poured upon him, and to those things of which they were typical.

If you refer at your leisure to the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of the Book of Exodus, you will see that there was to be provided for Aaron "holy garments for glory and beauty," which were to be of the most costly materials; of gold, and blue, and scarlet, and purple, and fine linen, curiously embroidered and made by men whom the Lord had filled with the Spirit of wisdom. When dressed in these garments of glory and beauty, Aaron was to be anointed with the holy anointing oil, which was to be made with the richest perfumes sending forth the sweetest fragrance, and was permitted to be used only by the High Priest, with this remarkable addition, that the blood of the sacrifices was to be sprinkled upon his garments.

It was in this dress, my friends, that the High Priest appeared on the day of atonement, after returning from the Holy of Holies, when God forgave the sins of His people.\*

May we not here behold Him who, having once offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, will appear in the day of His glorious espousals,

\* See Leviticus xvi.

“ the second time, without sin, unto salvation ?”  
For if the High Priest came forth dressed in garments of glory and beauty, how will He appear who is both King and Priest, when He shall come as “ THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS ?” \*  
Will He not, when clothed with that robe which He wrought out by His righteous life and obedience unto death, and when bearing with Him the fragrance of those graces with which this robe is perfumed,—will He not be seen as He is described by the Psalmist, “ All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia ?” For what are all the acts of His holy life, which form His robe of righteousness,—such as His humiliation as a babe in Bethlehem ; his filial obedience ; His midnight prayers ; His consolatory visits to the afflicted ; His patient endurance of evil ; His suffering even unto death,—what are all these righteous acts but, as we may say, the gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, of which the richly embroidered garments of the High Priest was composed ? since each separate act of our blessed Lord’s life, like these costly materials, forms a part of His perfect righteousness.

And what are all the graces which accompany these various acts, but as the precious ointment which gave so sweet a savour to the High Priest’s

\* Jeremiah xxiii. 6.

garments? So that when the Bridegroom of His Church appears, coming forth from the Holy of Holies, the palace of the Most High, these exuberant graces will be found far surpassing the fragrance of the most costly perfumes, insomuch that His very "name is as ointment poured forth."\* Well may the inspired writer of the Song of Songs say, with such ecstasy of delight, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart:" for in what glory and beauty will He then appear!

Having thus set forth the dress of the King, the Psalmist, after stating that Kings' daughters were among his honourable women, then introduces the bride in these words: "Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in gold of Ophir;" adding, at the thirteenth and following verses, "The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework: the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace."

\* Solomon's Song i. 3.



Here allusion is made to the customs in use in the celebration of marriages, when the greatest attention was paid to the dress of the bride, who appeared in richly ornamented apparel; and, accompanied by a train of virgins, entered with songs of joy into the residence of the bridegroom.

Without attempting to enter into a minute explanation of these verses, which the lateness of the hour would not permit, we may be reminded of that beautiful passage in the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet introduces the spouse of Christ, thus expressing herself: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." For what better idea can we form of the garments of His spouse than those which the Word of God declares the Lord provides for His Church? For if, in allusion to the marriage customs of the East, His bride here appears in gold of Ophir, or in a dress thus highly embroidered; if the Holy Spirit has condescended to use these emblems to express how the Church of Christ will appear at this joyful season,—how can we better realize this state than by consider-

ing that she will be then seen standing righteous, in the righteousness of Christ, and universally adorned with all the graces of the Holy Spirit? For thus arrayed, surely she will appear in robes far surpassing those which are embroidered with gold of Ophir, or with the choicest needle-work.

Wearing this beautiful dress, let us endeavour to realize her entrance into the palace of the great King. It will, indeed, be with gladness and rejoicing. For then not only will "a voice" be heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready;" but doubtless every angel and archangel, and all the principalities and powers of heaven, the cherubim and seraphim, and the innumerable host that stand around the throne, all will unite in one general song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

But, my friends, I must not attempt to exhibit this joy; for, oh! what mortal lips can speak forth the glories of that day for which the whole creation groans,—a day in which Messiah "will see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied,"—a day in which God will be glorified in all His holy

creatures, and when a "great multitude, whom no man can number, of all nations, tribes, and tongues," shall enter upon that course of blessedness which, like a full river, shall flow on with increasing joy, and ever-advancing pleasure, throughout the countless ages of a blissful eternity!

Let me, rather than make so vain an attempt, endeavour briefly to improve the subject by some practical reflections.

And, first of all, how ought this subject to fill our souls with grateful praise and humble adoration to our God and Saviour, for whom has He, who is Himself "fairer than the children of men," and whose throne, as God, is for ever and ever, vanquished all his foes, and espoused as His Bride? Aye, what *was she*, who then will appear at His right hand, arrayed in gold of Ophir, all creation rejoicing in her joy? What, I say, was this exalted Bride? She was, as the Prophet Ezekiel describes Judah to have been,\* a babe, cast out in the open field, to the loathing of her person, in the day that she was born; or, without a figure, the spouse of Christ is that portion of Adam's fallen race, whom, when they were lying "dead in trespasses and sins," our blessed Lord saw

\* See Ezekiel xvi.

in their low estate, and said to them, "Live," for "the time was the time of love." And as a consequence of that love, He gave Himself for his Church; He washed away her sins in His own precious blood; He clothed her in His own perfect righteousness; He renewed her soul by His Holy Spirit, and raising her from the grave, made her perfect through the comeliness which He put upon her. Yes, it was love, passing knowledge, passing praise, which raised His Church from that low estate in which sin had placed her, to that exalted station in which she will stand in the day of His espousals.

Surely, my beloved friends, such rich, free, and ineffable grace should fill our hearts with adoring gratitude, and lead us to say, with the Psalmist, "Blessed be his glorious name for ever" and ever; and let the whole earth be filled with "his glory. Amen, and amen."

2d. How should this subject lead us to earnest prayer for Divine grace, and to unwearied diligence "in making our calling and election sure:" that, seeing such exalted blessedness is offered to the chief of sinners, who come to the Lord with penitent and believing hearts, we may willingly yield ourselves to Him,—may give up ourselves to Him, body, soul, and spirit; and

having laid hold of Him, as "all our salvation and all our desire," may keep firm our hold, let nothing shake us, but "through evil report" and good report may follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," that at His appearing we may be found of Him without spot and blameless.

3d. With what meek reverence and holy fear should we seek to have our conversation. For if the Lord Jesus, in His abundant grace and surpassing goodness, is pleased to take His people as His spouse, what ought our religion to be but a religion of love?—every thought "being brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," and every desire of our hearts being to advance His glory and establish His kingdom.

He, like a Bridegroom, said to his disciples, "If ye LOVE me, keep my commandments;" making love the criterion by which our actions should be regulated. Let this, then, my beloved friends, be the climate in which we desire to live. Let us leave to others strife and debate and angry contentions, and let it be our great aim to be ready for the coming of our Lord. Let us, therefore, "watch and be sober." Let us keep our garments with constant care, so that when the cry is made, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;

go ye out to meet him," our loins may be girt, and our lamps be trimmed, and we be among that blessed number who, being ready, shall go in with him to the marriage.

Finally, my Christian friends and brethren, how should this subject provoke our lively zeal and earnest endeavours to awaken those around us who, while the Bridegroom tarries, slumber and sleep.

For if the sure word of prophecy, that word of which our Lord has declared, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall never pass away;" if that word assures us that our blessed Saviour will go forth in His majesty to subdue all His enemies, and that He shall prevail over them, how earnest should we be in our attempts to persuade them to submit at once to His righteous sceptre; that being drawn to His service by some of those polished shafts which He has in His quiver, they may avoid that fearful end which will overtake those obstinate sinners who, refusing to receive Him as their King, "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord."

I say, how earnest and how diligent should we be; for surely, my Christian friends, there remains but a little moment for us now to do

the work of God : “ the night is far spent, and the day is at hand.” For without attempting to decide whether the late event which has come upon all Europe like a thunder-storm, depriving in one day a king of his throne, and forcing him, with his princes and his counsellors, to fly for safety to foreign lands ;—without, I say, attempting to decide whether this sudden event is the commencement of the pouring out of the seventh vial of God’s wrath, surely it is an occurrence which ought to rouse every thoughtless sinner, and lead him to prepare for that great day which may come upon him with still greater suddenness. “ Behold,” says our Lord, “ I come as a thief in the night ;” as suddenly as the lightning’s flash passes through the heavens, or as the burning fire fell on Sodom, or the flood of waters overtook the world of the ungodly.

Rise, then, my beloved brethren, “ and quit you like men.” “ Be strong, yea, be strong in the grace of the Lord ;” **TRUST CONFIDENTLY ; PRAY FERVENTLY ; COUNSEL WISELY ; ACT PROMPTLY ; LABOUR DILIGENTLY ; WATCH CAREFULLY ; WAIT PATIENTLY ;** and, as we have no doubt we shall, **END JOYFULLY.** Remembering, for your encouragement, that the Lord hath said, “ **BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.**”

## LECTURE IV.

### THE GATHERING OF THE SAINTS AT THE APPEARING OF CHRIST.

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PSALM L. 1—6.

*“ The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence : a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me ; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness : for God is judge himself. Selah.”*

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OUR subject to-night is "The Gathering of the Saints at the appearing of Christ." The reading of this solemn passage, selected as an introduction to it, will prepare you to expect that it should be satisfactorily made out that this is *the* subject of which the Psalmist treats. Now the sum of what we have to say on the point is this. There can be no doubt that the Psalmist speaks of some coming or manifestation of the God of Israel. Jewish and Christian writers refer this to the coming of the Messiah. Upon the sense in which His coming is to be understood the whole interpretation of the Psalm must depend. It has become the custom with some Christian interpreters, in consequence, perhaps, of the controversy with Israel described in the latter part of the Psalm, to interpret this coming of some supposed advent of Christ distinct from his first to suffer, and from his second to reign,—a spiritual advent, by the power of his grace, to abrogate the Jewish polity and establish the Christian; and a figurative advent, by the judgments of his providence, to punish the Jewish nation for their iniquities.

But such an interpretation seems to be forced. The terms in which the first part of the Psalm is expressed do not admit of it. The very reading of them is sufficient to convince that

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those Jewish commentators are nearer the truth who interpret them as referring to the day of judgment. For to no other coming, as it seems to me, than that which we usually understand by the second Advent, can all the particulars of the description apply, while of this they are literally true.

Accordingly, those who are versed in patristic learning, tell us (and I mention this for the sake of showing that we are giving no new interpretation to this part of the Psalm), that in the writings of a distinguished father of the fourth century it is classed as equally applicable to the second personal coming of our Lord to judgment with the New Testament predictions, that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;" and "then shall be seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

This, then, is the great event which we believe to be announced in the text, "THE GATHERING OF THE SAINTS AT THE APPEARING OF CHRIST."

A subject like this, brethren, needs no extraneous circumstances to invest it with interest.

It is connected with the tenderest feelings of the children of God, and awakens their liveliest hopes. They are looking forward to it with outstretched necks. (Rom. viii. 19, 23.) But the very blackness of the sky at this time, and the total eclipse of some of its luminaries, tends greatly to heighten their expectation. They have learnt from the sacred astronomy of the Bible, that when these things *begin* to come to pass, they may begin to lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh.

It is true that the faith and patience of the saints may yet be prolonged for a season, and thoughtless or scoffing men be permitted to laugh their expectation to scorn; but without all doubt, *now* is their salvation nearer than at any former period. . The very fact that many of those signs are actually taking place which our Lord forewarned us would some time or other be the immediate forerunners of His appearing, is calculated, one would think, to impress every serious mind with the strong conviction, that the day of the Lord MAY BE at hand, and that, at a moment when the saints hardly expect it, the bright beams of the morning star may break through the dark clouds, and, in the twinkling of an eye, the trump of God may summon them into the presence of their Lord.

Brethren, on a subject so important and so glorious, I feel that *I* must have a faltering tongue. But I will not attempt more than to give you the plain testimony of God's Word, which he that runneth may read.

May He who made man's mouth, and who can give the hearing ear and the understanding heart, help me to speak of the glorious truths of Christ, and help you to receive what shall be said with the joy of those who know that through grace they are receiving a sure earnest of their everlasting inheritance!

My endeavour will be to bring Scripture testimony to the three points of our subject;—concerning the SAINTS who are to be gathered; concerning the FACT of their GATHERING together; and concerning the TIME and CIRCUMSTANCES of that gathering.

I. Who, then, are “THE SAINTS” for whom so blessed and glorious a distinction is reserved?

We answer, they are those who compose that elect body of redeemed sinners who are represented as the mystic Bride,—the Lamb's wife.

This is the answer to which our Lord leads us, when, in the 24th of St. Matthew, verse 31, he tells us, that he will “send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together

his ELECT from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The very word "ELECT" carries with it to some persons an unwelcome idea. It sounds like a party word, summoning religious combatants to controversial strife. But let us calmly consider the matter.

We are distinctly taught in holy Scripture, that of the many crowns which our Lord shall wear, there is one—it may be brighter than the rest—which will distinguish Him as the REDEEMER of His people. There is a kingdom which Jesus shall receive, in reward for His sufferings, distinct from the sovereignty which he exercises as the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. On this point I make no quotations, for you have heard it already enlarged upon. This, however, was the joy set before Jesus when He endured the cross, despising the shame. But it is with equal plainness set forth in holy Scripture, that there are SOME chosen out of mankind to have a share in the kingdom of the Son of man. Our Lord tells his disciples, Luke xxii. 29, 30, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." And more generally, Rev. iii. 21, "To

him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Accordingly, when the redeemed are represented as praising Him, it is because He has made them unto their God kings and priests, and they shall reign on the earth. Thus the prophet Daniel tells us, that the time will come when the kingdom of the Son of man will be established, and when his people, the saints of the Most High, shall take the kingdom and possess it for ever, even for ever and ever. The apostles of our Lord tell us of a kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him; that God hath called the saints to his kingdom and glory; that thrones are set for them, and judgment shall be given them; that if they suffer with Jesus, they shall reign with Him.

Now, whatever cavillings it may occasion, it is a fact, that invitations to the privileges of this kingdom are given only to those to whom the Gospel of the kingdom is made known; and that, while many who hear those invitations reject them, the greater part of mankind have never received them. The heirs of the kingdom, consequently, must be a select portion of mankind. They are described by our Lord as those which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world

and the resurrection from the dead ; and by St. Paul, as the vessels of mercy, on whom God has determined to make known the riches of glory,—“whom he foreknew, and did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

It may tend to do away with some portion of the difficulty which some feel in receiving this truth, to remember that the EFFECTS of redemption extend beyond the elect Church. The elect are literally the redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. They are chosen to be princes and rulers in the world to come, which is the kingdom of the Son of man. Does not their very position imply that there must be subjects over whom they rule ? and their title, as firstfruits of God's creatures, show that an abundant harvest may be behind,—a race of redeemed men, delivered from the consequences of transgression, and inhabiting a world delivered from the bondage of corruption,—a world upon which the Son of God may look down and pronounce all that He has redeemed to be very good ? .

This we know, that the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of the heavenly Jerusalem ; and that the earthly land of promise shall be safely inhabited by restored and con-

verted Israel. But neither of these will make up that elect body, as it seems to me, which shall be united to the Lamb. They shall be the subjects of the kingdom, not the rulers in it; they shall enjoy the happiness of the kingdom, but not the distinction which shall be the honourable privilege of those "who are Christ's at His coming."

If, then, the saints who are to be gathered at the appearing of Christ form his Elect Church, we may go on to observe that beyond the act of God's sovereignty, there is nothing in the descriptions given of them which convey the idea of exclusion or limitation.

1. The elect consist of the redeemed FROM ALL NATIONS. Whatever privileges some may have enjoyed more than others, it will be seen, when the number of God's elect is accomplished, that there is no nation or kingdom whither the Lord hath not sent to seek them. In describing the vessels of mercy, the apostle explains,— "Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Indeed, the fall of the Jews has been the riches of the Gentiles, though at this present time also there is a remnant of the Jews according to the election of grace. Now in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Gentile as such; but all are one in Christ Jesus.



Accordingly, His saints are to be gathered from the four quarters of the world. And when gathered, their grateful acknowledgment is,—“Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.”

2. They consist of ALL CLASSES OF NATURAL CHARACTER. The glorious robes in which they will soon stand, in glittering array, a great host, as the host of God, are all washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Not one of that countless multitude, who did not find that the Lamb's precious blood was sufficient to take out the darkest stain; not one who did not find that nothing else would effectually take out the least stain.

The amiable and consistent son of pious Abraham, and the once awfully wicked son of pious Hezekiah, will be ready to sing the same song of redeeming love; the beloved disciple will take his place by the apostle, who was once a blasphemer, and emulate his earnestness in exclaiming, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” The faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation,—that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,—will then be inscribed on every heart, and be the theme of every tongue: the chief of sinners will read the procuring cause

of his glory *there*, and the most eminently moral of those who have believed on Jesus to life everlasting, will trace it to the same cause, that he is not punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

3. They consist of redeemed sinners FROM ALL DISPENSATIONS. We know from our Lord's own statement, that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will be in the kingdom of heaven; and again, that all the prophets will be there; and also, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven. We know, also, that Moses and Elias appeared in glory. And the apostle adds to these honoured names, Abel and Enoch and Noah; Rahab, also, and Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, David, and Samuel, as well as the prophets, who through faith wrought righteousness, and obtained the promises. "Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the fathers did look only for transitory promises." During all dispensations, from the very beginning, the way of salvation through Christ has, with more or less clearness, been made known; and during all the changes and com-

motions of this transitory world, the Lord has been quietly preparing those lively stones, which, made ready before they are brought thither, shall, in the days of the true Solomon, be built up into a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

It is important to add, that this elect Church, composed of individuals of all nations, of all classes of natural characters, and of all dispensations, have all the same features of resemblance to Christ, and are thus fitted to compose the members of the one family who acknowledge Christ Jesus as Lord, and who shall dwell together in the bonds of everlasting brotherhood. Their gracious character may be summed up in two words,—faith and holiness.

The covenant with sacrifice they have all assented to. They have entered into its bonds by living faith. The vital truths have been written on their hearts, that no sinner can make agreement with God, except by sacrificial atonement, “without shedding of blood there is no remission;” and that no atonement can be sufficient to vindicate the majesty of the broken law, and to reconcile the pleadings of mercy with the demands of justice, except that which was

Offered by the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, and slain to take away the sins of the world.

This atonement has become all their salvation, and all their desire. A single eye has been given them, with which to look to Jesus for forgiveness, for acceptance, and for glory: they have had one heart, whose renewed affections have been fixed supremely upon Him; and as a sure consequence, all their redeemed energies have been consecrated to Him. According to the degree of light vouchsafed to them, they have thus judged, "that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again." Such characters cannot but love His appearing.

They are fitted for it by HOLINESS. Two cannot walk together, except they be agreed. As without holiness no man can see the Lord, so without holiness no one can have a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. But the name, Saint, implies a holy person, one who is separated to God. And the salvation of Jesus, applied by the Spirit to the heart, produces holiness. It is a salvation from sin first,—a salvation from all the consequences of sin afterwards.

Ask ye, then, who are the saints of God, who

shall be gathered together unto Him at His appearing and kingdom?

By their fruits ye shall know them. The Father's name is written on their foreheads. Holiness is stamped on their character, notwithstanding that it is too frequently dimmed and hidden by inconsistencies. They are saved from sin; they have given up their wills to Christ; they are made willing to live for Him, to labour for Him, to suffer with Him, to die for Him: they are contented, yea, through grace, thankful, to bear His cross, esteeming the reproach of Christ their honour, the service of Christ their delight, the love of Christ their reward. It is to such as these that it shall at length be granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. It is such as these, whether they have died in the Lord and are resting from their labours, or whether they are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, that shall be included in the summons, "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

II. Proceed we to consider THE GATHERING TOGETHER of the saints. This may be viewed in a three-fold aspect, as respects themselves, the angels, and Christ.

1. As respects **THEMSELVES**. The circumstances of the family of the redeemed have made it impossible that they could ever yet be assembled together at their Father's home. But mansions are now being prepared for them; and the time is fixed when there shall be a final gathering of all the children of God. The hope of this gathering is most powerful in its present influence upon their feelings and conduct. The solemn appeal of the Apostle to the Thessalonians,—“ I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,” shows that, whatever mistakes were entertained in connexion with the Lord's Advent, this at least was a matter well understood, and greatly desired. Nor can we wonder, for, besides more general reasons connected with the Lord's glory and the salvation of the whole family, there are some special reasons which I will venture to mention, which greatly tend to brighten and strengthen this blessed hope.

**PERFECTION** will characterize that gathering. The education of the saints will be perfected. They are at school in this present world, and have often hard and difficult lessons to learn, the end and design of which they cannot always see. But while learning them, they are unconsciously

gaining knowledge and experience and habits, which fit them to glorify God, in the enjoyment of their future inheritance. The time appointed of the Father will have come. They shall no longer be under tutors and governors,—their education will be finished.

The character and graces of the saints will be perfected. Who ever saw a perfect character on earth, except in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Abraham gave way to unbelief, Moses to passion, Job to impatience. Indeed, it is a common remark, that the most eminent saints have failed in that particular, for which, on the whole, they were the most distinguished. The weeds of corruption in the heart stifle the graces of the Spirit, and the climate of this world does not favour their full development. But then all will be perfect. Every saint will have perfect joy, perfect peace, perfect gentleness, perfect goodness, perfect meekness. Who that mourns over present imperfections, does not long for this blessed period? Truly may each, then, exclaim, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

UNION will characterize that gathering. Then truly will the children of God that are now

scattered abroad, be gathered together in one. There is union among God's children now; but it is a union which is not openly manifested, and which seems often greatly interrupted. But when the saints are perfected, and the different members of the mystical body fitted for their respective places, are brought together, "the perfect man" shall be exhibited, and all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Then will the Saviour's prayer be fulfilled, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." It is well to strive after the realization of this prayer by all lawful and fitting means, even now. The nearer we approach to its realization, the more we shall glorify God. But why should we be surprised that our eyes do not yet behold it? It is the union in glory for which the Saviour prays. Evidently so, I think, from what our Lord adds in the next verse,—“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

RECOGNITION will characterize it. This is no rash assertion. I know not how else to understand what our Lord teaches of multitudes coming



to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. Is it not plain from this language, that he who was known as Abraham on earth, will be known as Abraham in the kingdom of heaven,—that the same persons who were known as Isaac and Jacob, when they were men in the flesh, will be known as Isaac and Jacob when they are seen as saints in glory?

If so, a general principle is laid down, which admits of application to all the saints, unless it can be shown that the three patriarchs have a distinction in this respect peculiar to themselves. But what then are we to say of Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, so that even men in the flesh could recognise them as Moses and Elias? Moreover, did not St. Paul comfort the mourning Christians of Thessalonica, by assuring them that those for whose death they were sorrowing God would bring again with Him? The chief portion of this comfort would have been lost upon them, if they had not known that when the Lord brought their friends again, they would be able to recognise them. How cheering and refreshing a hope for the bereaved and disconsolate. Cherish it and dwell upon it, Christian brethren. It will alleviate many a bitter pang, and give birth to many a hallowed feeling. Only remember that we are speaking of the Recognition of SAINTS,

and of the fulness of joy which individual BELIEVERS shall receive, when, in the presence of their Lord and Redeemer, they are introduced into the society and acquaintance of patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, and of all the good and great who have lived for God, and slept in Jesus.

RESURRECTION, I need scarcely add, will characterize the gathering of the saints. This makes more certain our last conclusion. It is not as unembodied spirits, however glorious, that the saints shall be gathered to Christ. In their flesh they shall see God. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the dead in Christ shall rise, and then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. "Blessed and holy," exclaims the beloved disciple, "is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." As respects them, the last enemy will have lost his power, and sin all traces of its hateful dominion. Then will it be seen that the number of the elect has been accomplished, and the kingdom come for which they so often prayed. All the saints, the quick and the dead, shall be assembled together, and be prepared,

with songs of praise and triumph, to enter upon that final consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, which is reserved for them in God's eternal and everlasting glory.

Such is the gathering of the saints, viewed as respects themselves.

2. Let us now view this gathering in its connexion with the ANGELS.

Without doubt, the angels are to be the instruments of effecting the Lord's command, "Gather together my saints unto me." The command seems given to them. For this purpose they are summoned by their Sovereign Lord from the various posts assigned to them, as the ministers of His will.

I stay not now to dwell upon the interest which angels have always manifested in the concerns of man, or to speak of their overflowing gladness when God's goodwill to man was evinced in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; of their joy when the intelligence is communicated through their shining ranks, that a sinner has repented; of the willing zeal and readiness with which they wait to convey the departing spirits of the righteous into the regions of separate bliss.

But it is plain that the Lord makes His angels ministering spirits, sent to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. This is one part at least of their holy employment now.

The point before us relates to the closing act of their ministry as respects the elect Church. We are expressly told that He will send forth *His angels* to gather together His elect. As a flame of fire, or with the speed of lightning, they shall run to and fro to execute the will of their Sovereign Lord.

There are a countless multitude of saints to be gathered, and whether we consider those who are found alive, or those dead in Christ, who shall be raised first by that mighty power by which He shall subdue all things unto Himself, that countless multitude will be found scattered to the four winds of heaven, and dispersed all over the earth.

But the ministering angels will be equal to their glorious task. We are told that the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; yea more, that thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him. Quick as thought, with chariots of fire and horses of fire, as in the case of Elijah, these glorious sons of God shall convey the raised and changed saints, and introduce them, with their redeemed and glorified bodies, into the presence of their Lord.

Angels shall be employed again, but on a very different errand. "The Son of Man shall send

forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

But of *this* I have not to speak. May there be none of you among those upon whom they will have to execute this awful judgment! If so it be the will of our God, "the Lord grant unto us that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day." Then, as the children of the resurrection, we shall be equal to the angels, and they, approving our song, though it reaches to subjects of which they have no experience, will join in our praise, and with us ascribe "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever."

3. But we have yet to consider the gathering of the saints, as it RESPECTS CHRIST.

It is distinctly affirmed, that He will call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge his people. Thanks be unto God, the saints can never come into judgment for their condemnation; if we may so speak, they can never be tried for their life. There is a question to be determined respecting them; but this is not whether they shall be saved or lost. We have this on the authority of the Judge Himself:—John v. 24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me,

*hath* everlasting life, and *shall not come* into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." But though the saints may not be tried for their life, they may be tried for the apportionment of their place and glory in the kingdom. Their works as saints must come under review. "The Son of Man," we are told, "shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; and then he shall render to every man according to his works." In another Scripture we are taught, that on His return He will take account of His servants, for the manner in which they have traded with the talents committed unto them. And then it will be seen that "he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

How long the saints shall be with Jesus in the clouds, and what shall take place during that period, are points which we cannot determine. But it is plain that one object of the gathering of the saints to Christ, is preparatory to their COMING WITH CHRIST. His judgment upon the ungodly will be executed in the presence of the saints, and when they are with Him. Zechariah tells us, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee;" and Enoch states the purpose of his coming,—“to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their

ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." "But if He come to execute judgment upon the ungodly, and if the saints are to be with Him when He comes, they must themselves be sheltered from those judgments. As the temple of Baal was thoroughly searched, so that not one servant of the Lord remained within, but the worshippers of Baal only, before the command was issued, "Go in and slay them;" and as angels were sent to deliver Lot out of Sodom before the city was destroyed; so shall it be in the end of the world.

The salt will be removed from the earth, and then the iniquity of the earth shall be heavy upon it. Angels will gather saints to Christ, and then nothing will remain but a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. Yea, we are told that the righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance. "The high praises of God shall be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: THIS HONOUR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS." "When Christ who is their life shall appear," though it be for

the judgment of the ungodly, "they shall appear with him in glory."

There is yet another consideration connected with the gathering of the saints TO CHRIST, which gives a special interest to this part of our subject. It is, that it will be pre-eminently THE DAY OF THE GLADNESS OF HEART OF OUR ADORABLE EMMANUEL HIMSELF.

Even now, in His glory, there is a desire of His human soul which has not yet been fully satisfied. It is that His bride the Church may be perfected, and presented faultless before the presence of His Father. While but one elect person remains in the wilderness, or even in the outer courts of the sanctuary, this cannot be. But the gathering of the innumerable redeemed, of which we have spoken, is an event to which THE SAVIOUR looks forward with more fondness and earnest desire than even the saints themselves; and for this reason, that *His* love for them is far greater than *their* love for Him, and, by consequence, His desire for their society and communion is far more intense than their desire to be with Him. It would be refreshing to dwell upon those breakings forth of love which show the very fervent desire which He has always had for communion with His ransomed Church. I might tell how, when Almighty Power laid the foundations of the earth, it is



intimated that HE was rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and His delights were with the sons of men. I might remind you of the intercourse of Paradise, the visions of the patriarchs, the tabernacle in the wilderness, the Shechinah of the Most Holy, the solemn assemblies of His favoured nation. I might linger upon the great mystery of godliness—"the Word made flesh, and dwelling amongst us," and show how He manifested himself unto His people as He did not unto the world. I might remind you how the same feeling was manifested after as before His atonement, and that, after His resurrection, He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that of more than five hundred brethren at once, after that of James, then of all the apostles; and how, for forty days, He spake with them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. But, as these breakings forth of the Saviour's love, and of His desire for communion with His people, pass rapidly before you, what are the feelings which they excite in your breast? Surely you are ready to exclaim in the language of the Church, "The voice of my beloved!"—the voice which reveals the inmost feelings of His heart—"behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; behold, he standeth behind *our* wall, he looketh forth at the windows,

shewing himself through the lattice." Yes, brethren, I might still go on to show that JESUS now delights in the society of His people. I might tell how he delights in the gathering together of His people on OCCASIONS LIKE THIS; "Where two or three," He says, "are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." I might speak of His joy in gathering His elect to Himself by CONVERSION,—how he searches for His scattered sheep, and gathers them one by one to the security of His fold, where under His eye they may lie down in green pastures, and be led beside the still waters. I might solemnly remind you that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the DEATH of His saints," and that even the last enemy himself is made use of that Jesus may gather His people safe from all future harm, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. And it would, indeed, be a privilege to show the bereaved, the widow, and the orphan, that the tears which flow fast for the dead which have died in the Lord, do but affectingly tell that Jesus has been in His garden gathering the lilies which His own right hand hath planted, lest they should be injured by continuing any longer exposed to the chilling influence of the world. But why all this? To what would it lead? Christian brethren, beloved

in the Lord, as different streams pour their contents into the river, which at length discharges itself into the ocean, would not all these considerations go to prove the very fervent desires which Jesus, our gracious and glorious Redeemer, has for that EVERLASTING communion with His ransomed Church, which shall commence when His saints are gathered together unto Him at His appearing and kingdom? Would they not tend to show that there is an earnestness in Him which there is not in us,—an earnestness which would reprove our coldness of heart, our worldly-mindedness and unbelief? Might we not hear His voice to His Church, “Rise up, my beloved, my fair one, and come away?” Would not new force be added to His own last message, “Surely I come quickly!” And ought not all these considerations, connected with the Saviour’s desire and joy, lead us to respond more fervently and more sincerely, “EVEN SO COME, LORD JESUS?”

III. It remains only that we should speak of the TIME and CIRCUMSTANCES of the gathering of the saints; and if the Lord shall help us, the consideration of this will but tend to invest our subject with additional solemnity and importance.

1. Invariably does Holy Scripture connect the gathering of the saints with the PERSONAL APPEAR-

ING of Christ. It is when the sign of the Son of man is seen in heaven, and when he is seen coming in the clouds of heaven; that His elect are to be gathered. When His saints are caught up in the clouds to meet Him in the air, the Lord himself is to descend from heaven. He will judge the quick and dead at His appearing and His kingdom. His saints look for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ. Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time. The Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give the crown of righteousness in that day to them that love His appearing. So, in the text, there is everything which bespeaks personal presence, and the summons for the saints to meet Him, as well as the glory and the terrors of His procession to the judgment, give emphasis to the distinct assertions, "Our God shall come," and, "God is Judge himself."

Is it, then, true that unto them that believe Jesus is precious? Is it true that the love of Christ constraineth them? It must follow that they wish to SEE Jesus. If there be spiritual affections of which He is the object, and if these affections ever be in lively exercise, they cannot but long with holier feelings than some of the Israelites possessed, to "break through unto the Lord, and gaze."

But, Christian brethren, He has told us, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." Again and again, and yet again, our gracious Lord has said of those that believe on Him, "I will raise them up at the last day." His personal presence will then be their joy. "He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." He shall be crowned—you shall crown Him; adored—you shall adore Him; loved—you shall love Him.

2. The gathering of the saints will be introductory to the time of SPECIAL MANIFESTATION OF GLORY, and this connected in a special manner with Jerusalem. I mention this, because it seems to be set forth in the passage before us. In the two first verses the Psalmist speaks in the past tense, and this, it may be, because he is describing events specially connected with the glory of Him who calleth things that are not as though they were. His mind was fixed upon the period when all the parts of the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, shall respond to the call of El, Elohim, Jehovah, and then Zion will be specially favoured with His presence and glory. "Out of Zion" either HE who is the perfection of beauty will shine upon the nations of the earth, or, by His own glorious presence in Zion, will make it the perfection of

beauty, the joy of the whole earth. But this glorious period is to be introduced by the events that follow, and it is with the latter that our present subject is concerned. I will only refer to Zechariah, chap. xiv., as a passage in which we find the same connexion of events, though not in the same order. We are told of the day when "it shall come to pass, that the light shall not be clear nor dark;" that is, according to the marginal rendering, it shall not be clear in some places and dark in other places of the earth. "In that day the Lord shall be King over all the earth. There shall be one Lord, and his name One." But the prediction of this glorious period follows the announcement, that the Lord shall come and all his saints with him. The gathering of the saints, therefore, must be one of the introductory events to the glorious period thus noticed.

3. The gathering of the saints will be connected with a period of MARKED JUDGMENT. "A fire shall go before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." In conformity with this description, the apostle tells us that when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, it will be in flaming fire, taking vengeance. And the Lord Jesus himself informs us, that his coming will be ushered in, as it were, by the whirlwind

and tempest. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." (Luke **xxi.** 25—27.)

Alas! who shall live when God doeth this? May it not be that we ourselves shall? Certainly the political atmosphere, which has been of late so greatly disturbed, does not clear, but seems overcharged with the materials of storm and tempest. There must be a period—who can say that it is not now?—when the words of our Lord must have a distinct and literal meaning, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." Be it so, the people of Christ have nothing to be anxious for, except that they themselves may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. The Psalmist has expressed their confidence in the forty-sixth Psalm, in language with the spirit of which we cannot be too familiar in these trying times. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be

removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

4. I only add, at the gathering of the saints the time of FORBEARANCE will be at an end. Our God will no longer keep silence. This dispensation is emphatically the time of His forbearance and long-suffering. With much long-suffering He endures even the vessels of wrath. He seems, for the most part, to give the rein to their inclinations, and allow them to do as they list. It is His time of silence. To this He alludes when referring to the wicked, verse 21: "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes."

Yes, notwithstanding His forbearance, the day of the Lord will come. It is terrible to think of the wrath of the Lamb. His merciful forbearance will only aggravate the punishment of those on whom His wrath shall fall. Then it shall be too late to knock when the door shall be shut, and too late to cry for mercy when it is the time of judgment. There will then be no righteous man to stand in the breach, and to intercede for the ungodly to be spared. The saints will be with



the Lord; the remnant whom He preserves will enter into the chambers, and hide them for a little while, until the indignation be overpast. And THEN!! *behold!* the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. And when men “shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” Where, then, will be those to whom the warning of God’s ministers, respecting the approach of the day of the Lord, seems but as an idle tale, and they believe them not? Where will be the sons and daughters given to worldliness and sin, to whom the parent or the friend that exhorts them “to flee from the wrath to come” seems as one that mocketh? Where the professing Christian who has been attempting to reconcile darkness and light, conformity to the world with devotedness to God, AS IF it were possible to make too great preparation for glory—to love the Saviour too much—to serve Him too well,—WHERE? We can only answer, The time of forbearance is at an end! “IF ANY MAN LOVE NOT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, HE WILL BE ANATHEMA MARAN-ATHA.” “HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED, BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED.”

Who can pass from the review of such a sub-

ject as this without the earnest prayer, ‘Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. Whatever be the cross I have to bear, or the sacrifice I have to make, permit me to be within Thy everlasting covenant. Gracious Saviour, be *Thou* my Surety and Friend. Remember *me* when Thou comest in Thy kingdom, and may my unworthy name be then found enrolled with the names of Thy saints, that I may be gathered with them to meet Thee at Thy coming, and enter with them into glory everlasting.’

Under the influence of this prayer, let us determine to put in immediate practice the lessons to which our subject gives rise.

1. AVOID FORMALITY. This is one of the two sins specially condemned by the LORD in His controversy recorded in this Psalm. It is, moreover, the special danger of these latter times. The danger is the greater, because in connexion with this soul-destroying sin there is a name to live. The deceived heart cannot discover the cheat which Satan is trying to practise upon it. Cultivate, then, the religion of the HEART. Dread everything that draws away the heart from God: value everything that brings you more under the influence of Christ’s constraining love. Without

this, there can be no effectual preparation for the day of the Lord.

2. **AVOID INCONSISTENCY.** This also is condemned in the Psalm before us. It is not to be palliated or excused, from whatever cause it may arise ; whether from a heart not right in the sight of God, or from a mind not submitting to sanctifying truth, or from a life not under the continual influences of God's guiding Spirit. Pity and pray for the inconsistencies of OTHERS. Spare not inconsistencies in yourselves. But are there not some even now pleading to be spared ? Spare them not ; let sin be to you as the right hand, it must be cut off, or you cannot enter into life. " Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

3. **Begin a MORE DEVOTED LIFE OF PRAISE.** Well would it be could we form the gracious habit of recognising the daily mercies we receive from our Redeemer's hands, of tracing them to their cause, and of pondering what ought to be their fitting results. This is the return He expects. Remember His PROMISE : " Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me : and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

Finally. 4. **VALUE THE ORDINANCES** where

Jesus is wont to meet His people in anticipation of their final gathering in His presence and kingdom. This is the lesson which the apostle teaches us Heb. x. 25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." "Until," then, "the daybreak and the shadows flee away," we will be found in the continual use of appointed ordinances. Has He not said, "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." (Ps. cxxxii. 14.) Here then let *us* dwell: so shall our souls be strengthened and refreshed, to pursue our journey, and to meet necessary trials. And when the signal is given for the waiting saints to be gathered, we shall rejoice at the summons, and not have to exchange either our company or our employment. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then we shall see face to face; now we know in part, but then shall we know even as also we are known."

## LECTURE V.

### THE JOY OF CREATION AT THE COMING OF THE LORD.

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CANON OF WINCHESTER, VICAR OF HOLY ROOD, SOUTHAMPTON,  
AND RURAL DEAN.

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#### PSALM C.

*“ Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.  
Serve the Lord with gladness : come before his  
presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord  
he is God : it is he that hath made us, and not  
we ourselves ; we are his people, and the sheep of  
his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanks-  
giving, and into his courts with praise : be  
thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the  
Lord is good ; his mercy is everlasting ; and his  
truth endureth to all generations.”*

It was not till after his resurrection, that Jesus  
spoke to his disciples, expressly and in detail, of

"the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts i. 3.) There were, undoubtedly, reasons for this, some of which may be traced to the fact, that till then they were not prepared to receive the information. On the occasion of Christ's royal entry into Jerusalem, in fulfilment of Zech. ix. 9, "Thy king cometh unto thee," we read, "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him." (John xii. 16.)

It is a truth, which the experience of most of us has confirmed, that the mind of man is exceedingly backward to lift itself up to the knowledge of the glories of Christ's kingdom. It is not given to all to know "the mystery of the kingdom of God." (Mark iv. 11.) It is a knowledge which requires preparation of the heart; there must be previous instruction, an instruction which seems not at once to point to the full truth. The hearers of our Lord were taught by parables, which, while they have the whole truth in view, inculcate subordinate truths, necessary to be known, as well for present peace, as for further advancement in the perception of all mystery.

We cannot, therefore, feel surprised that the

right apprehension of the nature of the mediatorial kingdom is so little appreciated by the present generation. It calls for a rising up out of previous conceptions in which the Church has been long occupied, somewhat after the manner of the disciples of the Lord during his ministry to the Jews. They have regarded too exclusively the character and offices of the Saviour in his humiliation. The Church has been the preacher of his sufferings, losing sight of the glory that should follow. The sum of the experience, as it has been the height of the endeavours, of those who seek the kingdom of God, is to know Christ and him crucified; to attain to a "fellowship" in his death and sufferings, rather than to know "the power of his resurrection," and to "sit with him in heavenly places," and to cultivate the hope that purifieth, in the knowledge that "when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Divine wisdom provides for the Church in every age the word in its season. It may give to some the knowledge withheld from others, till God has prepared their hearts, and then causes the word to go forth, in the fulfilment of a purpose for which it is especially sent.

My Christian brethren, I would that we may all be duly sensible of the need of full preparation

of heart—as for me, to speak on the subject assigned to me, so for you, to hear what I sincerely pray the Holy Ghost to enable me to say, in entire accordance with Scripture, on CREATION'S JOY AT THE COMING OF THE LORD.

It must not be overlooked, that we are not prepared to hear or understand this subject aright, if we have not yet felt that joy which is now a part of the kingdom of God, and have not known our personal interest in the Saviour. Oh, let me press upon you the appropriation of the apostle's assurance, "I know whom I have believed." Lift up your hearts to this without delay, without reserve. Jesus, exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, waits to be gracious. Own him, and he will own you, by vouchsafing some foretastes and pledges of that unspeakable joy, of which now "we can only know in part and prophesy in part." Jesus may say to us, as he said to his disciples, even while they were hanging on his lips with more than usual anxiety, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John xvi. 12.) Oh, glorified Jesus, let thine own Spirit take away from us all slowness of heart to believe, all ignorance and contempt of thy word, and fit us to hear and receive the testimony of that word concerning thy kingdom and glory.



I take the word creation in the larger sense usually assigned to it, as embracing all created existence, more especially in relation to the redeemed; and purpose to consider—

I. The GROANS AND TRAVAIL OF CREATION in its present bondage state.

II. The JOY OF CREATION at the coming of the Lord.

I. I can but touch on a few characters and features of this bondage state of created things, more particularly such as make for the opening out of the nature of future joy. The obvious range of the subject, as opened by the apostle in Rom. viii., is too large for the limits of one discourse.

If it be objected to the taking of this survey, that we include inanimate things, which are incapable of the expression of sorrow or of joy, of which we treat, we reply, that we regard the share in either which creation has or will have, in the same light in which we acknowledge the manifestation of the attributes of Deity. It has pleased God to stamp some tokens of his "invisible things," on the things that are seen. So we are also told that tokens of vanity are impressed upon the creature, to show its bondage to corruption. Neither one nor the other is at once obvious to the senses, but both are to be searched into and inves-

tigated, more especially by a mind enlightened in the knowledge of the truth.

Very little reflection may convince us that we see not this world or its inhabitants in the state suited for the purpose destined by its Maker. I conceive we may allow a much higher estimate of the beauty, or even of the glory shed upon created things, before sin entered, than at present we are able quite to appreciate. Some glimpses, however, of that beauty flash across the mind, rejoicing in a God of peace, when the soul has more than usually realized its reconciliation, and the very face of nature seems to smile upon a restored child. May not the experience of this exquisite joy tell us something of the rapture expressed in surveying this newly beautified portion of the works of their God, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" They afterwards saw the being for whose dwelling this earth was destined, created in the image of the eternal Son of God; they witnessed the gracious converse of the same glorious Person with one made a little lower than themselves; they looked with admiration on the divinely planted garden of paradise, filled with trees in all the luxuriance given by the hand that made them.

But what means, they would ask, this more than usual darkness, which frowns in features of

displeasure over the night of the sixth day of creation? Man has fallen from his allegiance, sin has entered, and death with all its woe broods where once the Spirit of God moved. A curse has gone forth which has blighted the beauty of this world, and it is no longer the scene of innocence and peace. It groans under a bondage for which it was never designed, and cries out against the atrocities of some, and the sufferings of others, till the beneficent Creator responds to its sighing, and says, "It repenteth me that I have made man upon the earth." It is nowhere recorded that it repented him of having created the earth. What a pledge to the "earnest expectation of the creature, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God," "when the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

Did not the very trees of Eden sigh, when guilty Adam fled for shelter from his accusing conscience, and from the knowledge of his departed glory? Did not the ground from beneath groan when it received in its bosom the innocent blood of the slaughtered Abel? Was not the earth oppressed when it was filled with violence through corruption, and called for the destruction of its load by the hands of its Creator?

Are we not taught to look forward to a time when the earth, travailing in birth again for the children of the resurrection, will cast forth the apostate dead as an untimely birth, from which nature desires to be free? (Isaiah xxvi. 19.)

Surely it was no light hand of chastisement upon nature suffering with man, when God brought the flood upon a world of the ungodly; when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened; when a scene of indescribable confusion must have been witnessed by angelic beings in the entire breaking up of this earth, with the crash of rocks, the rush of waters, the conflict of all the elements, and the voice of an offended God heard in peals of thunder, his anger seen in flashes of lightning. Yet a pledge is granted of a future purpose, and of a full redemption hereafter to be vouchsafed, in providing for the ark of his little Church in a part of the mighty flood where, in a bosom of the waters, the agitated waves have heard a voice,—Peace, be still.

May we not trace a further subjection of nature to the God of redemption, with an anticipation of creation's future fellowship with the manifestation of the sons of God, when we see his captive Church brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand? The waters of the Red Sea open at his

command, as if they had been walled up on either hand to give them a passage out of an enemy's country; and a barren wilderness is made to furnish a table for his chosen family. What may we not expect for his redeemed, in their return to Zion, when the liberated earth, in the exuberance of her joy, will minister to their delight; when the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord? See the pledge of that future glory, in the midst of an army terrible with banners, as it moves through the wilderness little suited to entertain the Church of God. See them guided and overshadowed by the cloud of the Divine presence, and a council-chamber reared for access to the Supreme, whose voice is not seldom heard communing with their leader.

And when the Prince of life and glory comes to legislate for his rescued people, mark the consciousness of inanimate creation of His presence. His approach is ushered by thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud, so that all the people trembled, and Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly; an awful prelude of that time of which he has spoken, when he said, "Yet once, it is a little

while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations." (Hag. ii. 6.) It is man's guilt which causes these commotions in nature. The earth trembles and is agitated, the mountain quakes exceedingly, yet it is honoured by being made the throne of Jehovah ; it burns with fire, but it is not destroyed. The people cannot endure the voice of the terrible majesty of God ; and if a man do but touch the mountain, he must die ; yet that mountain bears upon its summit the revelation of the glory of the Lord. Oh ! gracious pledge of that time when the Lord of hosts shall reign upon Mount Zion, and before his ancients gloriously !

There is one awful event which ought to have due attention in connexion with this subject,—the crucifixion of the Lord of life. I will only refer to it for the sake of observing, that when nature gave the most unequivocal proof of bondage to corruption for man's sake, in a supernatural darkness over the whole land, in the earthquake and rending of the rocks, yet there was a pledge of its future deliverance and participation in the redemption of the body and manifestation of those who shall rise in glorified bodies, in the opening of the graves and the resurrection of the saints. That these only are said to have risen, bespeaks that particular event of which it was the pledge.

And yet, once more, there remaineth a season of tribulation to the earth and all that dwell therein, "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time." (Dan. xii. 1.) When there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars: upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. We are not to regard these effects as simply physical, ushering in some great change in the face of the earth: they may be connected with such a result; but rather as nature sympathizing with, and to express its share in, the curse of man's corruption; its birth throes in hope previous to its participation in the liberty of the sons of God; and, alas! the outward signs and tokens of the more fearful agitations of many not found worthy to escape what is coming on the earth. Creation groans and sighs with her children, some of whom she must lose for ever, before she enters into the joy of the redeemed.

II. The JOY OF CREATION at the coming of the Lord, I take to be the reverse of that bondage and sorrow under which it has groaned since the fall of man, the restitution of creation to that

state in which it may be the fit theatre for the display of God's redeeming power in bringing back wandering sinners to communion with himself, in which the wonders of redeeming love will have full scope. As Divine grace prepares the heart by the purifying influence of convictions, humiliation, and godly sorrow, for the indwelling of the Spirit in the temple of the body, so will he prepare the world for being the habitation of God with man, and a suitable domain for the abode of his own family. The whole face of nature will be renewed ; that which has been so often furrowed by bondage, labour, and toil, will be restored to bloom and vigour. The ground, which has so hardly yielded its subjection to man, that even in sorrow he may eat of it, shall of its own accord bring forth the fruits thereof in great abundance. The labour and toil of man in the sweat of his face, bespeak an anticipation of future bounty which the earth does not yet respond to. But that which has been promised to the Jewish Church will, we believe, be fulfilled to the whole earth: "Ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will mul-



tiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. . . . And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited." (Ezek. xxxvi. 28, 29, 30, 35.) "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength. . . . Ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed." (Joel ii. 21, 22, 26.)

The joy of creation will be the recognition of earth's rightful lord and owner, of Him whom God hath appointed heir of all things. The promise that He should be the heir of the world not only carries with it all spiritual blessings, but undoubtedly those which are to make this earth the scene of that revealed glory which shall hereafter cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. A glorified Saviour, and the host of the redeemed ones who are to share with Him in his glory, require a renovated earth to welcome

them. Those bodies of corruption, that once made the earth to groan under the deeds of the flesh, shall now be hailed by nature, delivered from this bondage, and sharing in the glory of the liberty of the children of God. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.)

The joy of creation will be in the recognition of another rule and authority, than that which now exists. We are expressly told, that Christ will "put down all rule and all authority and power." And why? Are not the powers that be ordained of God? and there is no power but of God. Yes, and the declaration shows, that hereafter it will more clearly be seen, in the sanction and in the execution of it, that all power is of God alone. Power requiring subjection is God's own ordinance, to be seen in all its excellency in the world to come,—an ordinance not now existing according to the full purpose of God, because impeded in its due exercise by the resistance or unfaithfulness of

man, resistance against subjection, and unfaithfulness in the exercise; an ordinance upheld rather by the providence of God than by its own administration. Alas! how seldom do we see rule and authority tending in its use to the glory of God, and the real welfare of mankind! All kinds of motives and ends distinctly and professedly carried out, rather than those principles and objects which are unequivocally in subordination to the will of God. All men seek their own things rather than the things which are Jesus Christ's, who shall, however, at length be head over all things to his Church, and in the meantime sits in "heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. i. 20—22.) Then shall "He that ruleth over men be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.)

I may be allowed, I trust, to introduce in this connexion a topic, to which every heart that has been awakened to that rare and inestimable quality, genuine heartfelt sympathy, will respond.

Will there not be joy to the animal creation at the coming of their Lord and ours? The irrational part of God's creatures has surely borne no small share of that bondage which sin has introduced, and the soul that pants for final redemption will certainly long for their deliverance also. Does not the mind sicken at the survey, which it cannot always turn away from, of the incalculable amount of animal suffering from the worse than brutal ferocity of man?—a ferocity which, unchecked by providence and other considerations, would undoubtedly extend itself to their own species in all the malignity of a nature debased below that of evil spirits. But on such a subject the renewed mind assuredly finds a resting-place of hope, when “violence shall no more be heard in our land, wasting nor destruction within our borders.” (Isa. lx. 18.) “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.” (Isa. xi. 6, 9.)\* This may

\* The same token of peace to the animal creation is introduced in two most remarkable prophecies in the Old Testament, Isa. xi. and lxx., in which are set forth so many blessings that must be taken literally and in their strictly

be figurative, some will say ; but the soul that has been disciplined to a profitable contemplation of prophetic anticipation may not thus be deprived of the literal reality which even these figures, if such they are, involve.

There will be joy in the moral creation, brought, as it will then be, under the fuller control of the spiritual creation in each believer. The moral powers of man will more fully recognise the creating power of the Spirit, and rejoice in the experience. I cannot for one moment doubt of a much larger moral influence accompanying the power of Divine truth on the soul, in those who will then constitute the Church on earth. How dark and obscure is the reality of this influence in the present day, in many who appear to have tasted the good Word of God ! How indistinct the line which separates the renewed character from the unrenewed ! How seldom, alas ! do we find "bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, put away, with all malice !" (Eph. iv. 31.) If the apostle needed to give this admonition to one of the most exalted Christian Churches in primitive times, it was not because they had just emerged from heathenism, with the remains of a heathen obvious meaning, that to introduce another system of interpretation would cause an unconnected strain of ideas.

state cleaving to them, but because of the inherent tendency of our nature in its present condition, and the inevitable result of the state of the profession of religion where the evil are so greatly mixed with the good. We are, indeed, compelled to look forward to a very different condition, when the apostle's admonition will be seen exemplified in all its beauty: "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. iv. 32.) When love shall be the fully developed character of the disciple of Christ, not in its present feeble power, but in the energy of its pervading and supreme authority, in the fulness of the stature of a man of God. Now we mourn the chilling influence of a very different disposition, and the more we desire to maintain the indwelling of Christian love in our own souls, or the manifestation of it in our lives, the more we shrink from that communion which ought to be the solace of our present imperfect state; we fall back upon ourselves, and fall under the snare of our own evil hearts, when we might unite in mutual edification, and strengthen each other's faith and hope. Oh! when will the Church of Christ do honour to the royal law of love, and "loving each other with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pet. i. 22), show that they

are waiting for their Lord, and are hastening his return.

There will be joy in the intellectual creation ; I mean, the intellectual powers of man will rejoice in the coming of the Lord. If the study of revealed truth has so ennobling an influence on the mind, as the means, in connexion with its renovating influence on the soul, of lifting it up out of the carnal state in which it lies without grace, what will the final revelation of all truth in the full accomplishment of its purposes, and in the epiphany of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, do for the elevation of the human mind, renewed after the image of Him that first created it in knowledge and all wisdom ? It is certain we are at present but little acquainted with the attainable exercise of the intellect. Some little intimation we have in the case of supereminent talent in some one branch of knowledge. In extraordinary cases we have proof of the grasp of human knowledge and understanding, not to be accounted for by previous instruction, or at all intelligible on any principles of our present experience. In a future state there may be an enlarged faculty of apprehension, and comprehensive understanding of every subject presented to the intellect of finite creatures, aided, undoubtedly, by means of communication peculiar

to spiritual beings; a matter this, not appreciable in our present state, however we may be convinced, by many proofs not seldom presented to us, of its existence; and at this point of a speculation, within which we desire to tread warily, we see a very striking evidence of Divine wisdom in the order of the world to come. If the faculties of them who shall inhabit the world to come shall be so enlarged, then shall they be ministered to by saints in glorified bodies, with all the energies and capabilities belonging to this exalted state of existence: not unfitted for this service themselves, nor finding the objects of their care and superintendence unequal to that beneficial intercourse which shall then be established between the Church above and the Church below, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times," when he shall "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth," "unto the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." When that new song, already heard in vision, shall be sung in fruition, "Thou art worthy . . . for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the



earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, are heard, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 9, 10, 13.)

And there shall be joy of the whole creation upon the victory obtained by the Lamb over Antichrist and all his hosts; and they shall "sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." (Rev. xv. 3, 4.) "When His glory covers the heavens, the earth shall be full of His praise." (Heb. iii. 3.) And surely an universal tribute,—a free-will offering of praise, which this earth has never yet rendered, is due to the Almighty Creator of all things, when He who once looked down on the works of His hand, and owned every thing to be very good, shall at length hear the responsive notes of praise awakened by His goodness and mercy, beaming from all creation: "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the

inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." (Isaiah xlii. 10—12.) Not only have holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—anticipated this universal shout of praise, but elevated souls, filled with the best of all gifts, the gift of love, have had foretastes of this unspeakable joy vouchsafed to them, when they have looked forward almost in vision to times of glory yet to come. Oh, it is no less profitable than it is ennobling, to look forward in faith and hope (to use the words of a late writer), to "the glory of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness upon the nations, the light and holiness of the Gospel poured over the world, and transfiguring its tribes and institutions with blessedness. From their post of observation in heaven, methinks celestial intelligences enjoy something of such a view, as they see Christ's kingdom advancing, the troops of darkness fleeing, the mists of error rolling from the earth, the shrines of idolatry falling, the true temples of God everywhere rising, nation after nation coming to the light, the world awakening to God's praise resounding.

From every clime they come, in every zone they kneel; from continents and islands, in sun-burned Ethiopia and ice-clad Greenland, eastern Java and the natives of the farthest west, unfettered Africa, and China from the thralldom of her gods.

“One Lord, one Father! Error has no place,  
That creeping pestilence is driven away;  
The breath of heaven has chased it. In the heart  
No passion touches a discordant string;  
One song employs all nations; and all cry,  
Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!  
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks  
Shout to each other, and the mountain-tops  
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,  
Till nation after nation, taught the strain,  
Earth rolls the rapturous Hosanna round.”

Having now brought before you what I humbly conceive to be the hope of revelation, and the hope of those who simply depend upon Divine teaching according to the word, as to future joy, I shall next proceed to inquire what reference to this hope we find in that portion of the Word which has been assigned for our consideration this evening.

We need not start aside at our entrance on this meditation with the impression that this Psalm has not usually been so understood. There is

this most remarkable character in the language of inspiration, that while it is suited to any present standard of devotion, and perfectly adapted to be the expression of faith and hope, that fall far below the full warrant of revelation, it does, at the same time, wrap up in itself the larger views attained by a more mature knowledge of the Divine will.

It must be borne in mind, also, that there are many passages of Holy Writ, which, while they could not be adduced as independent proofs of any particular view, may be rightly understood and correctly appealed to on points more clearly revealed elsewhere. The great question is, in all such cases, what is the right interpretation without wresting or perverting any expression of Sacred Writ?

It is entitled A PSALM OF PRAISE or of confession, *i. e.*, in a way of thanksgiving. It is the only Psalm with this title, used with thank-offerings, and on any great deliverance from evil. The Jews say, the only sacrifice that shall continue for ever is the sacrifice of praise; and this sacrifice will be offered when the kingdom spoken of in the previous Psalms has been fully established.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE, or, more literally, shout for joy. It is the shout of victory and of

triumph for which the returning Saviour calls when he descends from heaven (1 Thess. iv. 16), to be responded to BY ALL LANDS, rather by all the earth. SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS is undoubtedly to be understood of the worship of Jehovah, and the word GLADNESS is that which is used of the congregated people of Israel keeping a feast to the Lord. (2 Chron. xxx. 21, 23, 26.) COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE WITH SINGING, rather with joyful shouting. Every word implies a reality which will never be fulfilled till Christ has gathered in one the whole family in heaven and earth. It must be seen at once that the language is drawn from the levitical worship of the tabernacle or temple, to which it is more appropriate than to our present mode of worship; but, at the same time, there are many expressions which show that an intelligent worshipper of Israel must have looked forward to the times of the Messiah in the use of this Psalm when making the confession of praise. So ought we. The true evangelical use of this form of praise is to anticipate the time when we "come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born." (Heb. xii. 22, 23.)

If the Messiah be the speaker in verses 1, 2,

He is Jehovah of verse 3, who will then be acknowledged to be God, to whom is to be ascribed our spiritual as well as our natural creation: KNOW YE THAT THE LORD HE IS GOD: IT IS HE THAT HATH MADE US. So in Eph. ii. 10, the word "make" is used in a spiritual sense. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." AND NOT WE OURSELVES; or, as in the margin, AND HIS WE ARE—HIS PEOPLE, AND THE SHEEP OF HIS PASTURE. It might seem as if this language were more appropriate to the present dispensation than to any future condition of Christ's people, especially their coming to glory. There is a peculiar suitability in the figure of a shepherd applied to Christ, in all ages of his Church, but more especially in the dispensation of the fulness of times. According to the usage of Eastern courts, there was always a chief shepherd, of high and noble birth, near to the throne, under whose command and authority all the vast flocks and their shepherds were subject, and by whom they were frequently inspected. It was a trust of high responsibility and of distinguished honour; and with great propriety applied to the Messiah, the Prince of the flock, or Chief Shepherd,— "the Shepherd of Israel" (Ps. lxxx. 1), that was brought again from the dead to sustain the

office (Heb. xiii. 20), and will appear again in that character, to give to his under-shepherds, who have been faithful, a crown of glory (1 Pet. v. 4); and then He will be THE ONE Shepherd: "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it. . . . Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, 30, 31.)

ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE: BE THANKFUL UNTO HIM, AND BLESS HIS NAME. There is in this verse, as well as in verse 2, an evident allusion to the tabernacle, or temple-worship, which, in our use of the Psalm now, imports our access by faith through Jesus Christ, to the mercy-seat of Jehovah. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; the door or gate by which, if any man enter in, he shall be saved. (Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12; Heb. vii. 25; x. 19.) These words we may regard as the call of the Messiah,

or of the Church in his name, to spiritual communion with himself. (Ps. cxviii. 19, 20.) But they also point to that time when the tabernacle of God shall be with men: "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." (Ezek. xxxvii. 27, 28.) When "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony shall be opened," and all the redeemed shall be admitted to a very near and intimate communion with Jehovah. (Rev. xv. 5, xxi. 3, 24—26.) Verse 5, is the giving of the reason and ground of the demand in verse 4. **FOR THE LORD IS GOOD; HIS MERCY IS EVERLASTING; AND HIS TRUTH ENDURETH TO GENERATION AND GENERATION.** The everlasting unchangeable mercy of God, is the first motive of our turning to Him, and of our continuing steadfast in His covenant, and shall be the subject of praise in the world to come, and of unceasing praise. As the Lord is good, and his mercy is everlasting, so the full perception of these attributes in a perfect state, shall call forth praise, unceasing and unwearied, from hearts that never faint.

But, my beloved Christian brethren, we must be reminded that we have not yet attained this



perfect state, the Church has not reached this fulness of joy; and I must not forget that I address those who are in the flesh, many of you burdened with sin, all of you full of imperfection, bearing about a body of sin, in which the flesh lusteth against the spirit. But you will not say none of this joy is yours; you will not put aside the anticipation of this joy, weak and unworthy as you are in yourselves. Though you lie, like Job, in self-abasement, repenting in dust and ashes; and though, like Jonah, you may cry from the belly of the grave, and say, "I am cast out of thy sight;" yet with Jonah, you may say, "I will look again toward thy holy temple." And as it was the consolation, the strengthening of the faith of the Old Testament saints, to be often looking to the temple, in which was the veiled presence of Jehovah; so it is your privilege, not only with boldness to find an access which they had not, but with joy unspeakable and full of glory, to lift up your heads, and look towards that temple where your everlasting joy shall be found.

But are you not called now to cultivate the foretastes of that future joy? I humbly conceive that the deadness of this day's profession is because men do not thus sow to the Spirit; and our communion, as believers, is not characterized

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by the aim to be helpers of each other's joy. Therefore do the sons of peace go mourning, and not with the confidence and freedom of sons of the Most High. Therefore do they sink under trials and temptations, as though there were no deliverer in Zion; and therefore it is that they live far below their high privileges, as well as below their exalted character of co-heirs with Christ.

Is it not from the same cause that we find such a deadness in our ministration, as though it were still our lot to prophesy in sackcloth, and could never lift up our heads to the time when those whom we address shall be our joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? (1 Thess. ii. 19.)

But perhaps it is the testimony to this future joy, rather than the fuller experience of it in the heart, that is to be the character of the present age; it may be that we have a duty to fulfil, in bearing this testimony just before joy cometh in the morning: as yet sorrowful, but always rejoicing, only in faith. And this testimony will ever find its way to a renewed heart, where no string ought to respond so readily to the touch, as that of joy; and though the vibration may produce only a still small voice to the conscience, it will console the heart of a

weary pilgrim, or of a care-worn herald of peace. Oh! if there be truth, as there is, and sincerity in such inward experience of this present joy of the Holy Ghost, what a burst of joy will then break upon many a soul that is now saying,—“O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I flee away, and be at rest!”

“O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.”

## LECTURE VI.

### THE VISIBLE MAJESTY OF CHRIST'S RETURN.

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#### PSALM XCVII. 1—7.

*“ The Lord reigneth ; let the earth rejoice ; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him : righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world : the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols ; worship him, all ye gods.”*

THE subject matter of the Psalm from which I have read so large a portion, is admitted by all expositors, whether Jewish or Christian, to be the kingdom of Messiah.

The author of the Psalm is said by some to have been Moses, by others David, but the character and spirit of the prophecy seem at once to classify it with the many similar descriptions of the day of Christ which, without a question, were given by inspiration of God to the latter. And herein the Royal writer affords us 'a most instructive example of the large and longing desires of a living faith; for, looking through and beyond the increase and government of his own son, to whom special temporal privileges were secured by Divine covenant, he views, with glad anticipation, the coronation of a greater than Solomon "in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." (Cant. iii. 2.)

And here, too, is a noble example for the kings and princes of the earth, who would do well to be wise, and be instructed by David to wear this inscription upon their hearts and upon their crowns, "The Lord reigneth."

But, to come more immediately to the explanation of the Psalm, it will be seen that the adaptation of it to the day of Christ, rests upon a very sure and solid foundation. St. Paul, in

Hebrews i. 6, quotes the Septuagint version of the seventh verse, applying it directly to the person of Christ, the God-Man, his object being to prove the real Deity and dignity of Jesus above the angels, and all that is called God, as an object of universal worship. This quotation, therefore, forms a key of interpretation for us, and places the subject before our minds in a very practical and tangible form.

Another ray of light may be brought to bear upon this point from the preface which the apostle makes to the quotation, "When He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world," implying, as it would seem, not His ascension into heaven, for that would be a taking him out of the habitable world (*οικουμένη*); nor, again, His first Advent, for then He came in meekness and lowliness, and was despised and rejected of men, but his visible manifestation at the second Advent in majesty and great power: and this interpretation is confirmed by the internal evidence which the Psalm from which our text is taken supplies. And, strange to say, the very arguments used by Dr. Owen\* and others, to prove a spiritual Advent, and, consequently, to limit the inter-

\* His arguments are:—

1. Jews and Gentiles are invited to embrace the salvation, and to rejoice in it.

pretation to Gospel times, are those which we would ourselves employ to fix the application to the day of Millennial glory. Let us mark, for example, the contrast between the confusion of idolaters (in verse 7), and the joy of the daughters of Judah (in verse 8), because of his judgments. Now, I know not in what manner it can be said the daughters of Judah rejoiced at the first coming, seeing they had cause to weep and lament for their sons and daughters, when they called down the blood of Jesus upon themselves and on their children; nor is it clear that any consistent harmony of interpretation can be made out, by which Zion and the daughters of Judah can be understood to mean the spiritual Church, on the one hand, and the worshippers of idols, heathens, on the other; but it is most certain, by reference to Scripture, that the confusion of idols and the joy of Zion are connected with Christ's second coming to judgment. Thus, to select one or two, out of many passages which might be adduced: in Isaiah ii., the first five verses describe the state of restored Jerusalem, and the twelve tribes are invited to enjoy their privileges, "O house of

2. An exhortation to idolaters to worship Christ, and the Church to live holily.

3. Because he promises to the Church complete deliverance from the wicked, and from her persecutors.

Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord." Then, in that day (ver. 11, 17), "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the Lord alone shall be exalted;" and (ver. 18), "the idols He shall utterly abolish;" again (ver. 20), "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." In the xlvth chapter of Isaiah, we find a similar connexion at ver. 15: "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." I do not delay to point out the same coincidence in the xxxvith and xxxviith chapters of Ezekiel, or in Psalm cxv., for we have yet another note of time whereby to connect the Psalm with the Millennial majesty of Messiah. The prophecy is addressed "to the earth and the multitude of the isles," an expression denoting those who, in the order of Divine dispensations, are afar off, and



reserved to be the latest recipients of Gospel light, but who, in the fulness of times, should know who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. Thus the islands are frequently summoned to hear the tidings of latter-day glory. When Christ has set judgment in the earth, the isles shall wait for his law; then follows the invitation, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles and the inhabitants thereof. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." (Isaiah xlii. 4, 10, 12.) "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far." (Isaiah lx. 9.) "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." (Psalm lxxii. 10, 11.) "The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen." (Zeph. ii. 11.)

If, then, we regard the manner in which the 7th verse is used by St. Paul in Hebrews i., the peculiar connexion in which the confusion of idolaters stands with Zion's joy, and, finally, the

persons who are more particularly addressed, we may conclude that the Psalm is as the blast of a trumpet, and the solemn proclamation of the reign of Christ, announcing His visible approach in personal majesty and justice, corresponding to the sounding of the seventh angel in Rev. xi. 15, &c., "And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders . . . . fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

Having thus identified the Psalm with the pre-millennial advent of Christ, I proceed to consider

the detailed account of His visible majesty, as given in the words of the text; and notice,

I. The signs of His appearance.

II. His judgments in the earth.

III. His salvation in the heavens.

I. The signs of His appearance.

1. I assume that the return of Christ will be personal and visible; we shall see Him as He is, that He will come from heaven where He now is, and appear to them that look for Him a second time without sin unto salvation.

I assume farther, that as He ascended in a cloud, so He will come in the clouds of heaven—that this, in fact, will be the literal and exact fulfilment of our Lord's words, Matt. xxiv. 30: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn. And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." And this corresponds with the prophecy in our text (ver. 2):—

"Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."

Such, then, will be the first sign of His approach. He will make a cloud His chariot. The heavens will become black as sackcloth of hair,

and usher in the great and terrible day with storm and tempest. The lowering sky will frown upon an apostate earth, while the cloud on which He sits will be gilded with all the splendour of eternal glory, as it reflects back His majesty. All is light above; all is dark below. Thus Joel describes it, Joel ii. 1, 2: "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess; a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains." And again, Zeph i. 14, 15, &c.: "The great day of the Lord is near: that day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness." And again, Amos v. 18, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light."

The harbinger of Christ's return will be darkness. As in the creation of old, darkness brooded upon the face of the deep, before the word of God said, "Let there be light;" as in the regions of a Christ-denying nation the sun refused to look upon the blood of Calvary; so, in the day when apostate Christendom shall have filled up the cup of her iniquity to the brim, the sun and the moon

shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. For so He has forewarned, whose every word is truth. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.) How deeply touching and instructive is this description! what spectacle more grand—what sight more solemn, than nature's presage of a tempest!

"As we often see against some storm, a silence in the  
                  heavens,  
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below  
As still as death."

*Shakespeare.*

The clouds gather together in mute and dense columns, as if to concentrate all their strength; the light of day becomes obscured; a lurid dimness veils all creation in mystery, causing men's hearts to fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth. And what more suitable indication of the majesty of Him who has long forborne and suffered the unbelief of an ungodly world? "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him,

and they also which pierced him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." (Rev. i. 7.)

And here let us observe, that these events distinctly prove the personal and visible majesty of Christ's return. For whatever spiritual, providential, or political movements may be connected with the last days, it is evident that the second advent will be ushered in with such signs and circumstance as will announce to all the coming consummation. Then it shall not be a question as to the extent and degree of spiritual and moral darkness ; then, it shall not be a controversy as to what part of the political heavens are clouded ; but nature herself shall draw the veil, and spread the covering which will envelop man in darkness as thick as that of Egypt, and compel him to acknowledge the presence of God and His majesty, as much as the army of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, when the pillar of cloud moved to the rear of Israel. Yes, it will be a night long to be remembered. The night in which no man can work. The foolish virgins and hypocrites will be shut out in outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. "For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in

travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. xxx. 5—7.) It is the night of nature—the eve of her resurrection. An eclipse of the moon at the full, or of the sun at mid-day, is not more visible than the dawn of that day will be when Christ appears.

But I proceed secondly to notice,

II. His judgments in the earth.

1. And here I take first in order verse 4, "His lightnings enlightened the world." For this is everywhere declared to be the first stroke of His anger. No previous note of warning besides that of gathering gloom; no pealing thunder, but that of the still small voice in the word and conscience; but suddenly and surely, in the twinkling of an eye, "as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in his day."

"The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night; for when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. v. 2, 3.) "For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Luke xxi. 35.) And now, what will be the surprise

and dismay of those who for the first time see Jesus, not by the light of a cloudless sun, but in the flashing and intermitting glare of judgment, beholding the wrath of the Lamb between each successive stroke of vengeance? Long have they set Him at nought, refused His law, and denied His name; but now they are made to feel the shock of His anger.

“Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: and his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.” (Isa. xxx. 27—30.) Oh, have we ever started at the crash of some stately tree or massive building which has been rent to shivers by the forked fluid? have we ever at such a moment, amid the wreck before us, and the thunder’s roar above us, realized the power of God, and the sensible proof of His majesty? Then be well assured the time is at hand, when the arrows



of Messiah's judgment will be sent forth swift as lightning in the execution, when they shall see and be ashamed. "Yea, the fire of thine enemies shall consume them," "and the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south." (Zech. ix. 14.)

2. Next in order I take verse 4. The earthquake which accompanies these sudden darts of woe,—“The earth saw, and trembled.” And here, it is not for us to determine what physical wonders will be wrought in the earth's material fabric, or what commotions will disturb the nations: no doubt there will be both. It is enough for us to take the Word of God as we read it, and to believe that where a physical earthquake is spoken of, it will be physical; where political, political; and where spiritual, spiritual. Certain it is, that Haggai's prophecy has not yet met with its fulfilment. “Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.” (Hag. ii. 6, 7.) Now, St. Paul tells us, “This word, Yet once more, signifieth the (*Μεταθεσις*) removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may re-

main." (Heb. xii. 26, 27.) Here, then, is a shaking, both political and physical, preparatory to the translation,—the passing away of old things, and the introduction of new. And this combination of material and moral has been of very frequent occurrence. The new star announced the Saviour's birth; the earthquake, and the rending of the veil, His death. (Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.) Events altogether miraculous and supernatural, proclaimed sensibly the moral wonders which God wrought. And so it will be again, with this difference,—that what shall be must excel that which has been. For His voice at the giving of the law shook the earth. And Moses exceedingly feared and quaked: but now, He hath promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." And where is the heart which can contemplate such wonders without a deep and solemn foreboding of their reality? Where shall we find words, but in Scripture, by which to measure the terror and grandeur of the scene?

"The windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression

thereof shall be heavy upon it ; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isa. xxiv. 18—23.)

Yet once, it is a little while, and the storm which now is gathering on Europe will pour its flood on the earth. The woe of the seventh trumpet, and the dregs of the seventh vial, will join their terrible issues, and there will be a time of trouble such as never was before. Let him that readeth understand.

" And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, *from the throne*, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings ; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell : and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto

her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." (Rev. xvi. 17—20.) Let those who already feel the heavings and convulsions of a disordered world, lay these things to heart; and as they look for an overturning, and an overturning, and an overturning, let them remember that these things come to pass that the Scripture might be fulfilled,—“His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw, and trembled.”

3. I come next to the judgment by fire which will melt the earth, and burn up his enemies round about him. (Ver. 3—5.) And here it will be necessary to enter more at large into the reasons for concluding that the conflagration at the Advent of Christ will not be total and annihilating, as regards the substance of this terrestrial globe. The passage which is considered to establish the view of entire dissolution, is 2 Pet. iii. 10 and 12. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.” And again, verse 12, “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be

dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." I say "the passage," because it is to be observed that, although reference is made to other Scriptures which speak of the heavens vanishing away like smoke (Isa. li. 6), and waxing old like a garment, and being rolled together like a scroll (Ps. cii. 25, 26; Isa. xxxiv. 4; and Deut. xxxii. 22), yet the whole basis of the argument rests upon the reasoning which any philosopher or geologist might advance. There is no appeal to parallel prophecies to establish the doctrine of universal destruction; no attempt to meet the difficulty which other portions of Scripture would suggest, if such an interpretation were admitted. And now let us take the Word of God, and compare Scripture with Scripture, to see whether the dogma of a partial conflagration at the Advent of Christ, be "fundamentally destructive of the whole Gospel scheme," as an able and popular writer has declared it to be.

By reference to the whole chapter (2 Pet. iii.), it will be seen that the argument of the apostle is not one of *contrast*, but of *analogy*. St. Peter is vindicating the truth of God against the scoffers, who say, Where is the promise of His coming? Where are the new heavens and the new earth? (ver. 13,) for "all things continue as

they were from the beginning of the creation." Now, he says this is untrue. All things do not thus continue; for a flood of waters once destroyed the world of the ungodly. And the heavens and the earth, by the same Word, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. There has been one judgment, and there will be another. The parallel lies between the water in the one case, and the fire in the other. In both, the punishment of the ungodly is the end chiefly intended. Now, although the earth was completely overflowed with water, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened; although for forty days and forty nights the element of water had uncontrolled possession of this globe, and exerted all its power to dissolve and destroy; although St. Peter says distinctly, the world that then was perished, yet we know the heavens and the earth remain, and will remain, to pass through a flood of fire, when the hills will melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The deluge of water is the type and precedent for believing that the promise concerning a judgment by fire will be, in God's time, executed. The point to be insisted upon is not the geologic

extent of the judgment, but the fact that, as water was used in the one case, fire will be in the other. God has nowhere in His Word declared that He will annihilate the globe, which we call earth; on the contrary, He has expressly declared, *that He will not again smite any more every living thing, as He has done* (Gen. viii. 21); and in multiplied promises given us the assurance that the earth, which has been the scene of suffering and humiliation, shall be the platform of a Saviour's kingdom; for thus He has taught us to pray, saying, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

I quote from an Exposition of Adams, in 1633, who was not a millenarian:—

"The earth was witness of the offences done against Him. Let this new earth bear witness of the praises given to Him. All the combats and conflicts of the saints were upon the earth; therefore even there also let them wear their crowns. On earth they were persecuted; give them leave in the same place to triumph, that earth, which was the land of the dead, is become the land of the living." And it is still further evident that Peter does not predict a total annihilation of the globe, for he is not uttering a new prophecy, but quoting from Isaiah,—which prophecy has a limitation. For whether we take

the description of the new heavens and the new earth, in chap. lxv., or the prophecy of the judgment in chap. lxvi., we have in both cases a series of events to follow, which cannot by any possibility be explained away as belonging to any other globe than that which we inhabit, however changed and remodelled the external surface of it may be. Thus, Isa. lxvi. 15, 16, "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many." Here, in the text itself, is a limitation, but it is added, ver. 19, "I will send those that escape of them unto the nations," &c. I leave the other quotation in Isa. lxv. 17, to the advocates of an universal destruction to harmonize the existence of restored Jerusalem in its progressive stages of social development and enjoyment of national peace in any other earth than that which is and has been the local habitation of that ancient people. But we go further, and urge that there is a chronological and a geographical limit in Scripture to the actual spread of this consuming fire; for we find the places in which it will rage. Thus, "the fire of the Lord is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." (Isa. xxxi. 9.) Where-



ever Christ's personal presence is, there will be the fire. The wicked one will be revealed visibly and locally, "whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.) The consumption will be commensurate with the existence of the enemy to be destroyed. Thus, in Dan. vii. 9—14, the destruction is limited to the body of the fourth beast: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit . . . his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. . . . I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." And if this be true of the kingdom of the fourth beast in Daniel, it is true of the great city in the Revelation of St. John. "For Babylon shall be burned with fire; and they who traded with her shall see the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!" (Rev. xviii. 18.) Nor is it essential to our argument to decide the identity of the man of sin with Babylon and the beast in Daniel. It is enough for us to show, in the midst of the many diffi-

culties which attend the subject, that the prophecies are consistent and harmonious in describing the progress and extent of the conflagration in its first stages, for time would fail me to enumerate in detail the passages which declare that the enemies of Messiah shall be gathered into one place, which specifies the locality, the manner of their destruction, and the events following that judgment. (Joel ii. 30 ; iii. 2—16 ; Zech. xiv. 2, 3 ; xii. 3, 6 ; Isa. xxix. 5, 7 ; Mal. iv. 1, &c.)

Such, then, are his judgments in the earth, sudden, terrible, and convulsive, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. i. 7—9.)

I proceed, lastly, to notice—

3. His salvation in the heavens. Ver. 6, "The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory."

If the circumstances of the Advent are accompanied by such portents of grandeur to the earth, as we have already seen, how much more blessed will be the sight of the King Himself and His attendant train in the heaven ? Thine eyes shall behold the King in His beauty ; clothed in the

garments of salvation, surrounded by the Church of the Redeemed. Now in the blazing beams of eternal light, the Redeemer and the redeemed will shine as stars in the firmament; they will see Him as He is, and be like Him. Now gathered from the earth, and admitted to the heavenly mansions, they will be seen of men below forming a cloud of glory. "Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife." "They sit upon thrones," "they judge the world," "they judge angels,"\* they are made unto God kings and priests. Behold, they worship Jesus, and cast their crowns at his feet; they sing their songs of triumph; they fill all heaven with their hallelujahs; the saints are joyful in glory, they sing aloud upon their beds. Now the Sadducee is silenced, for the Resurrection is manifest. Now the Pharisee is confounded, for salvation is of grace;—Jesus is the Lord our Righteousness. Now the Herodian is abased, for Jesus is King. Now the sceptic and the scoffer, the Rationalist and the Infidel, the Socinian and the Jew, the Papist and the Pantheist, will be compelled to acknowledge Jesus to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father. "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the

\* 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Rev. i. 5, 6; ii. 26, 27; iii. 21; v. 9, 10; Luke xxii. 28—30; Ps. cxlix. 1—5.

congregation of the saints. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee? The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." (Ps. lxxxix. 5, &c.)

It is no poetical figure which describes this scene: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints." (Jude 14.)

It is no vision of fancy which says, "If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.)

It will be nothing less than a reality when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii. 27.)

But I forbear to enlarge upon this head, as it has already formed the subject of a previous Lecture. Suffer me briefly to address a word of exhortation, and that, too, with reference to the eventful times in which we live.

Whatever prospects of universal piety and peace men have imagined, whatever changes the state of society and civil Government may undergo, still the subject of our Psalm remains in all its glorious and awakening strength;—"The Lord reigneth." And every new event bids us look for His more speedy appearing.

We have proved from Scripture testimony, that the latter times will be marked by violence, unbelief, and departure from the truth,—that Jesus will come in vengeance to His enemies,—and therefore we lift up our voices, as in the days of old, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." We are not wearied with repeating again and again the solemn warning. We are not the less importunate because dates have been fixed, and calculations have failed, and studious and pious minds have been mistaken. We are the rather urged to increased earnestness by the very circumstance of their failure. Yea, we are instructed and excited by reconsidering the grounds upon which they have formed their opinions, and are constrained to wonder at the extent of foresight vouchsafed to them in so deep and mysterious a subject. Let it be borne in mind, that the old students of prophecy were not compilers of almanacks, haphazard guessers at coming events, who annually varied their form of prophecy, and, like

the Grecian oracles, worded their expressions to suit war or peace, life or death ; but they were men of piety, and many of them martyrs to the cause of truth. They gave the data of their observations, and directed their disciples to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the sure word of prophecy, as a light shining in a dark place. And by a passing reference to their works, it will be seen that they hit the circle, though not always the centre, in their exposition of the future. Will it be believed that Archbishop Brown, in 1551, four years before the death of Ignatius Loyola, traced out by the light of Scripture the rise, progress, and exposure of the Jesuits ; that Dr. Goodwin, in 1639, anticipated the spread of democratic principles in Europe, when men of dignity and office should be bereft of their names and titles, which would be rooted out for ever, and pointed out France as being the kingdom of the ten which should have the last great stroke in the ruin of Rome ; that John Knox, in 1572, denounced the wrath of heaven upon France, saying, that God's vengeance should never depart from the King of France nor his house, and none that shall come out of his loins shall enjoy that kingdom in peace and quietness ?

Again, in 1687, Peter Jurieu marked out France as the tenth part of the city which should

fall in the earthquake. His words are most curious :—" But who must begin this last revolt? It is most probable that France shall : not Spain, which is yet plunged in superstition. It cannot be any country but France, which a long time ago hath begun to shake off the yoke of Rome."

"These great events deserve to be distinguished from all others; for they have changed, or shall change, the whole face of the world."

In 1663, Dr. H. More speaks in similar terms of the destruction of Babylon and the idolatrous body of her clergy. Thus, too, Archbishop Usher, in 1655; and Christopher Love, in 1651; Robert Fleming, in 1700; Dr. Gill, in 1748; and Willison, in 1742; and a host of more modern writers, whose praise as well as whose reproach, in some cases, is in all the Churches, with an accuracy perfectly astonishing, describe the persecution of true and vital godliness; the growth of Rationalism; the wars which desolated Europe at the commencement of this century; the rise of some one great man, in 1795; the shaking of Popery at a time when she thinks herself most secure. And with such examples before our eyes, are we to slight and mock the labours of patient and prayerful men, who from time to time direct us to the dim outlines of the dawning day? Be ye ready! be ye ready! "for at such

an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." What man was ever exposed to greater mockery than Noah? what man more regarded as an enthusiast? The world around him ate and drank as usual, planned their schemes of future prosperity, talked of floods, and earthquakes, and judgments, as matters of mere threatening, old wives' fables. And as for Enoch's prophecy, and his son Methuselah, and the direct revelation to Noah, what was this but a traditionary dream—a vain babbling? And when the years were accomplished, and the ark was completed, and the animals from all quarters were assembled, wild and tame, savage and domesticated, and were all housed in the ark, and Noah and his family were entered into the ark, and God had shut them in,—I say, then, for one entire week, did an ungodly world reject the word of prophecy? (Gen. vii. 10.) Yes. They saw the gathering storm in the heavens, and they disbelieved the word; they saw the lightning, and they repented not; they heard the pealing thunder and the down-pour of the deluge, and they were hardened in sin; and so the world that then was perished. Oh! my brethren, this is no highly-coloured portrait, but just a plain outline of what you may see with your eyes and hear with your ears on every side. For one that lives in the habitual expectation of



Christ's coming, how many millions put off to an indefinite period the evil day? And this leads me, further, to observe, that this warning is especially directed to professing Christians—persons living in Christendom—persons baptized formally into the visible Church. I care not so much to inquire what their local habitation, as their connexion with the limits of the empire of the fourth beast. I care not so much to ascertain who is the individual Antichrist, and the man of sin, as to identify the many Antichrists who, in their individual and corporate capacity, will be summoned shortly to the valley of decision. Now, I look not for them among the Heathen, among infant Churches and congregations where the first love of religion is kindling its precious flame; but I look for them among civilized and intellectual communities which adopt the name but deny the power of godliness. I look for them among apostates, and hypocrites, and lukewarm professors who have once worn the badge and joined the ranks of the Church of Christ. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (1 John ii. 19.) Backsliders and deceivers such as these form the congregation of

Antichrist; men who received not the love of the truth, and who obeyed not the Gospel: Judas, and Demas, and Diotrophes, and Simon Magus, and Jannes, and Jambres, fit disciples of corrupt principles and a corrupt system. Yes, for such as these is the warning appropriate in days of declension and delusion. Well may they tremble who live in the midst of privilege, and who partake not of the sanctifying liberty of truth. Well may they fear who have no refuge in the day of trial but a graven image, or an idolatrous priest: "Confounded be all they that worship graven images:" and confounded they will be when "*the fire* shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. iii. 13.) "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." (Rev. xxii. 14, 15.)

Let Papists and Semi-papists be warned lest they be destroyed in the plagues of apostate Babylon.

Finally, beloved brethren, amid the strange convulsion which is turning the world upside-down, on the edge of that volcano which will shortly burst forth its torrent and engulf millions

in ruin, let us learn in our patience to possess our souls. The Lord reigneth, although we see Him not as yet ; but we shall soon—eye to eye—face to face ; we have to do with a real, living, triumphant, and glorious King. He is seen of angels, and will be seen of all the world. And in that day we shall be able to join with one who was admitted before the time to catch a glimpse of what He will be, and say, “We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but are eye-witnesses of His Majesty.”

## LECTURE VII.

### THE SIGNS OF ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE, AND OF MESSIAH'S ADVENT.

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PSALM CII. 13—18.

*“Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.”*

WE here meet with a plain-speaking passage of the word of God, one written in characters so clear, "that he may run who readeth it" (Hab. ii. 2.), and which so directly addresses the understanding, that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (Isa. xxxv. 8.) It speaks of subjects of high and holy interest, and of one of overwhelming importance; and it is upon this passage, as upon a sure foundation, that the two great doctrines are resting, concerning which we are to make inquiry, and upon which I have been appointed to address you this evening: I mean, THE SIGNS OF ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE, AND OF MESSIAH'S ADVENT.

That it is a duty to mark the signs of the times in which we live, is distinctly taught in the Scriptures; and there seems to have been two periods, in which, above all others, this duty was incumbent upon men; and there yet remains a third,\*

\* There are, in fact, as stated above, three principal events, of the coming of which signs have been given in Scripture. *The first* of these was our Lord's first appearing. Of this the following signs were given: Gen. xlix. 10 [according to some, though Jos. Mede considers it not to have been fulfilled until the destruction of the Jewish State by Titus, "Mede's Diatribes"]: Deut. xviii. 15: Isa. vii. 14: Jer. xxxi. 22: Isa. xi. 1: describing the low estate of the house of David, like a tree cut down, whose root alone is

more important than the other two. When our divine Lord was ministering on earth, he addressed the following rebuke to his own generation : "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" (Matt. xvi. 3.) Now, if this were important at the first appearing of Christ in the flesh, and were then an acknowledged duty, how much more so now, when that great consummation is about to take place, toward which God has been overruling all things from the beginning, toward which the whole course of this world has been directed, and every act of angels and of men has been contributing its share for the completion of "the mystery of God" (Rev. x. 7.), as, ere long, to be made manifest "in the dispensation of the fulness of times." (Eph. i. 10.)

But who is sufficient for these things? O thou condescending Spirit of the Father and the Son, come amongst us, we beseech thee, and with great might succour us! Enlighten our understandings, that we may perceive the truths which

left in the earth. Isa. xl. 3: explained to the Jews in Joh. i. 23—27: Isa. xxxv. 5, 6: explained to the Jews by the Lord, Matt. xi. 5. *The second* of these events was the destruction of the Jewish State, of which signs were given in Dan. ix. 27: Matt. xxiv.; and in Luke xxi. With *the third* we are about to be engaged.

are contained in this portion of the Divine word. Solemnize every spirit, drive away every intruding thought, and suffer not the world, the flesh, or the devil, to divert our minds from a fixed attention to the great doctrines before us; and do thou prepare us hereby for the coming kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with thyself and the Father, be all honour and glory, now and for ever!

Our subjects for meditation fall naturally into two parts; and so I propose to consider them.

I. *The Signs of Israel's deliverance.*

II. *The Signs of Messiah's advent.*

I. The time would fail us, on an occasion like the present, were we to enter upon all of these signs. I shall therefore select a portion of them, and the following important fact as the first:

1st. *That the name of JEW has ceased, or is ceasing, to be a by-word among the nations.*

When we look back upon the history of that wonderful people since the time of their overthrow and dispersion by Titus, that history appears to fall into three divisions: the first, extending from their dispersion to the sixth and seventh centuries of the Christian era, that is, to the rise of Popery in the one, and of Mohammedanism in the other: the second, from these two periods to the first French Revolution; and the third, from

the first French Revolution to the present time. Were I asked to describe the true character of these several periods, I should reply, that the first was one of unwearied turbulence, and of resistance to the will of God: in the hope of removing his judgments from the nation, and of recovering the land, and of rebuilding the city, of the one of which God had said that it should lie desolate (Isa. vi. 11: xiii. 9: Jer. iv. 7, 27: l. 3: Ezek. xv. 8, &c.); and of the other, that it should be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. (Luke xxi. 24.) Indeed, in the days of Julian, the Apostate, they proceeded so far as actually to clear the ground in order to lay the foundation with great and ostentatious preparation, when the very earth on which they stood, more obedient to God's will than the people who called themselves by his name, opened her mouth, and vomited forth fire against those who, thus presumptuously attempted, to bring to naught his unchangeable decrees.\* During this

\* "The Christians entertained a natural and pious expectation, that in this memorable contest, the honour of religion would be vindicated by some signal miracle. An earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fiery eruption, which overturned and scattered the new foundations of the temple, are attested, with some variations, by contemporary and respectable evidence." (Gibbon, chap. xxiii.)



first period, also, they were active persecutors of the Christians, in informing the Pagan rulers against them, and purchasing them as slaves whenever the opportunity was afforded, and this at a time when they had experienced no provocation from the professing Church of Christ.

The character of the next period was one of complete oppression. Then it was that the predictions by Moses, and after him by Solomon, were fulfilled to the letter. The Lord did indeed send upon them "cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that they set their hand unto." "The fruit of their land, and all their labours, a nation which they knew not eat up." "They became an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord led them." (Deut. xxviii. 20, 33, 37: 1 Kings ix. 7.) Then it was that they were ground down by oppression, by plague and trouble: then the clouds of Divine displeasure frowned most darkly upon them, during the mystic period of 1260 years of Papal power: then, they learned, that it is impossible for man to strive with his Maker, and that the issue of that contest must be hopeless when he ventures to run on the thick bosses of Almighty power.

[\* A reference to some particulars of that

\* The passages within brackets were not introduced, when the Lecture was delivered.

period will confirm all that I have here stated.

“Popery in particular frowned upon them, which is the more remarkable, because the principles which constituted it were the counterpart of that Rabbinism which had grown up in the Jewish Church, and were indeed derived from it by the early Judaizing fathers, viz., an exaltation of human traditions over the verities of Scripture: a superstitious multiplication of ceremonies and of the forms of godliness, to the neglect of its power.”—“The clergy of the Romish Church, now ignorant, superstitious, and bigotted, had throughout regarded the prosperity of the Jews with jealousy, and those princes who had more decidedly favoured them, had not escaped the imputation of infidelity. At length the representations and influence of the Ecclesiastics prevailed, and to trample on the Jew came to be generally considered as an act of merit in the sight of God. They were again disqualified from military and civil offices, and were not even permitted to purchase or rent land, to act as stewards or bailiffs, or in any capacity which could give them the slightest authority over Christians. Not only was their testimony against Christians refused, but they were prohibited from maintaining suits at law against them. In the principal cities and

towns they were confined to a particular district, in which they were commonly locked up at night; and they were degraded by some badge or article of dress to distinguish them from other citizens. In Austria they were forbidden the use of the baths, and even of the inns, resorted to by Christians; and Christians were interdicted from social intercourse with them."]

"In Portugal the name of Jew came to be so infamous, that a Christian who was called by it was permitted to stab the offender with impunity. At Thoulouse it became a custom to smite them on the face at Easter. But it remained for the Germans to affix the deepest stigma on them, and to degrade them to the level of cattle, causing them to pay toll for passing through the gates on their highways." [Toll tables are still to be found in that country, on which is inscribed,— "For a horse, two kreutzers; a pig, two kreutzers; a Jew, one kreutzer."\*]

In England, though they were mightily oppressed, and some Jewish blood was spilt, the great object of our princes appears to have been to extort money from them.

When, however, that period had run out, of which we have been speaking, and the power of

\* "History of the Hebrew Nations," pp. 502, 503, by Rev. J. W. Brooks.

the Papacy was broken by the iron sceptre of Napoleon, then a brighter day began to dawn upon the Jew, and his reproach amongst the nations to be removed. Laws were enacted in their favour, and in France this was eminently the case. The ruler of the French thus began to carry out the Divine purpose, although his real and too ostensible object was his own aggrandizement, and the furtherance of his schemes of personal ambition. Hence, we know, that he proposed to re-establish the Jewish Sanhedrim, and that in Paris, thereby, and thence, as from a centre, to govern the Jews, and, by their known intercourse with almost all the world, to promote his political schemes. In Russia, much encouragement was given them, and England and Prussia moved in the same direction. From that time to the present their civil disabilities have been removing; and in our own favoured land, one of the questions which of late has excited the public mind is this, *Whether Jews may be permitted to legislate in the Parliament of Great Britain?*

Of the merits of this question it may be better not to speak; but when we remember the position which our beloved country occupies amongst the nations, and couple with it this fact, who can hesitate, even for a moment, in arriving with

me at this conclusion, *That the name of Jew has ceased, or is ceasing, to be a by-word among the nations?*

2d. Another sign, confirmatory also of the foregoing, is found in *The wasting away of that empire whose foot has long trodden down Jerusalem.*

Two very remarkable circumstances have occurred within the last four years, which, whilst they may excite the surprise of some, have only confirmed the faith of others in the sure fulfilment of God's purposes concerning his people. It may be in the recollection of those whom I address, that, in consequence of a Greek youth having been put to death near Brussa, as an apostate from Islamism, our Government, without loss of time, or waiting for the co-operation of the other Christian powers, demanded of the Porte that all persons, her subjects, and professing Christianity, should be exempt from persecution on account of their religion. It was replied, that were it not a practice enjoined by the Koran, Turkey would gladly meet the wishes of Great Britain. Our Government, however, would not yield, and seconded by Russia, who expressed the like sentiments, the Sultan was constrained to give way, and to undertake "to prevent thenceforward the execution and putting to death of the Christian, who is an apostate."

[This declaration was dated 21st March, 1844.] It was then observed, by some, that this decree referred only to Christians; but that, in order to complete it, the Jews must be included, and from the expectation to which the prophetical Scriptures had given rise, that this would probably occur by, or before, the present time. Hence we learn from the "Jewish Intelligence" of February, in the present year, that this has actually taken place, and "that the Turkish authorities have declared, *that adult Jews are perfectly free to choose for themselves in matters of religion,*" which great advantage for the cause of truth has been more fully secured for them by a Vizerial order obtained by Lord Cowley from the Sublime Porte. Here we ask, Why has the sword of persecution fallen from the hand of the Turk, but because the arm that wielded it has lost its strength? The props of that kingdom have been the five great powers of Christendom: two of these have actually sunk from under her, and, of those which remain, Prussia has enough to do to maintain her own position; and the long-known feeling of Russia towards Turkey, prevents us from considering her as an actual support; so that, in the existing state of things, Great Britain alone can now be regarded as her principal stay. Hence we may conclude, that, as the sword of

Turkey has fallen powerless to the ground, because the arm that wielded it has lost its strength, so the foot, that has long trod down the once Holy City, must partake of the common weakness of the body, and ere long cease to tread that down for ever.

3d. Our Psalm supplies us with another, and an important, sign of Israel's approaching deliverance, where it says, verse 14, *That God's servants take pleasure in Zion's stones, and pity the dust thereof.*

Consider, for a little moment, the widespread interest which has been, and still is, increasingly felt respecting Zion, of whom it had been long, and justly, said, "This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." (Jer. xxx. 17.) Call to mind how many have of late visited that land, with which some of our holiest associations are connected, and that with objects of true Christian philanthropy : how many works also have of late issued from the press on the subject of the Holy Land and its proper inhabitants, and though in former times exertions have been made for the good of that people, yet nothing to be compared in extent or efficiency with those which, during the last forty years, have characterized the exertions on behalf of the Jews. But we should attend to the particular expressions employed by

the Holy Ghost in this passage. It is here written, "*Thy servants* take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof;" and when we remember, that the Queen of England and the King of Prussia have united to promote the spiritual well-being of that people, we see in this a literal fulfilment of the Word of God by his prophet, "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their Queens thy nursing-mothers." (Isa. xlix. 23.) But let us look a little further into this subject. What section of the Church of England has supported the establishment of a Christian Mission and Bishopric, in connexion with the Anglican Church on Mount Zion? Is it not that section which holds fast, and by God's grace will not let go, those principles for which our blessed Reformers lived and died: who consider the Protestant features of our Church as forming a most valuable part of her character? None can gainsay it. And who are they, who have not only stood aloof in the day of need, but have done their utmost to hinder, and, if possible, to overthrow that right Christian undertaking? Are they not men who eat the bread of a Church which they are endeavouring to destroy? Are they not men, who, calling themselves Protestants, are striving to "unprotestantize" our Church and nation, and who, if influenced by the



common honesty of Christian men, would long since have gone to "their own place," and that place, the pale of the Church of Rome? But was this the act of men only? No, no: there was one behind the scenes, who, understanding revealed times and seasons better than the Church herself, could ask, accordingly, at the first appearing of the Lord in the flesh, "Art thou come hither to torment us *before the time?*" and who, knowing now that his time is short, and that his torment is actually at hand, will prevent, so far as possible, the understanding of every sign of his approaching downfall, as well as every endeavour which is making to promote the work of God in the earth. From all which we conclude that "the Lord shall arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

4th. But all this receives confirmation from the belief *that the long predicted period of Gentile oppression of God's people Israel, has now come to an end.*

I trust that this congregation will bear with me for a little moment, whilst I refer, in few words, to the sacred numbers. There appears to me to be a palpable error into which many fall, when speaking upon this subject, and a consequent

confusion of terms. What God *has revealed* cannot be reckoned among the "*secret things*," which belong unto Him. But he has revealed the numbers, or dates, with which we meet in Scripture; and these are connected with the history, past or future, of his Church and people; and as the whole of the Bible belongs to us, and to our children, so must this portion. Now, when I consider the occupation of Daniel, as that is recorded, chap. ix. 1, 2, and find him engaged, at the time there spoken of, in meditating on the sacred numbers revealed to Jeremiah, in order to discover the end of the seventy years' captivity, under which his people were then suffering, I find that, when I am occupied in seeking after the end of the long period of Jewish tribulation, by means of the numbers revealed to Moses and Daniel, my occupation is the same as his; and I have, moreover, a greater incitement to do this than he had, inasmuch as far greater events are connected with this deliverance, which will be "life from the dead" to the nations. From considering these portions of revealed truth, I have long since been taught to believe, that, with the approaching Passover, the period of Jewish oppression under Gentile rule must conclude; and we find, in confirmation of this expectation, that the Jew

has not only ceased to be a by-word among the nations, but that the sword of the persecutor has fallen from the hand which held it, because that hand has no power to wield it any more against him; and thus the one appears to strengthen and confirm the other.

II. We proceed now to the second part of our subject, and to *inquire after The Signs of Messiah's Advent.*

Before we commence our meditation upon it, may I be permitted to ask, In what spirit it becomes us to do this? Are we to view it as a dry subject of speculative divinity? Is it to be bandied about as it seemeth good in our sight, to be believed by one party, because such or such persons believe it, and to be denied by another, because such or such persons deny it? Surely not; for of all the subjects which ever engaged the mind of man, there is no one to be compared with it in awful overwhelming solemnity. The becoming spirit, I conceive, in which to approach it, is that in which Jehovah instructed Moses to approach Himself, when he said, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (Exod. iii. 5.) But it is desirable that it be clearly understood what we intend when we speak of *The Coming of the Lord*; for there

appears to be a series of events, so necessarily involved in that expression, that they can hardly be separated from it. When speaking of Messiah's advent, I first understand, that the glorified God-man will leave his Father's throne, or right hand, from which he has been ruling over all things since "he ascended up on high" from the Mount of Olives, "led captivity captive, and received gifts for men."

That then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. (Matt. xxiv. 30.)

That the first Resurrection, followed by the sudden change and rapture of the saints, shall succeed.

That God's judgments will then be in the earth: all which shall, in due time, be completed by the Lord's descent upon our planet: when "the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." (Zech. xii. 5.)

Here there may be some questions requiring solution; and the first will probably be this, What are we to understand by "the sign of the Son of man?"

There are two expressions in the New Testament of the same construction, which may direct us to the true meaning: the one, Matt. xii. 39, in which our Lord "answered (the Pharisees) and said unto them, An evil and adulterous gene-

ration seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." What was the sign in this case? "The prophet Jonas." The other, Rom. iv. 11, "And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision." What was the sign in this case? "Circumcision" was the sign. In like manner, when our Lord says, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven" (Matt. xxiv. 30), what, we ask, will then be the sign? Following the same rule, we reply, "The Son of man" will be the sign: in other words, the sign of the Son of man will be the first Epiphany, or appearing, of the Lord, when he will have come to our heavens, when he will say, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is Judge himself." (Ps. l. 5, 6.)\*

The next probable inquiry would be respecting the rapture of the saints; Why I believe, that these shall be removed before God's judgments are poured out upon the earth? If we examine the various figures which are employed in Scripture to instruct us concerning this event, they all teach the same lesson. Where was Noah, when the flood-gates of heaven were opened, and the

\* See, on this subject, "Abdiel's Essays," page 151.

fountains of the great deep broken up? Safe in the ark which he had prepared, and "the Lord had shut him in." "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Where, we ask, was Lot, when the fiery flood descended from above, and the heavens rained down fire and brimstone upon the cities of the plain? Safe in Zoar. "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither." (Gen. xix. 22.) "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Where were the children of Israel, when, "in the morning watch, the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians?" "The Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore." (Exod. xiv.) "So shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "God is in the midst of her; therefore shall she not be moved: God shall help her, when the morning appeareth." (Ps. xlv. 5, marg.)

Where, again, were the Hebrew Christians, when Titus invested Jerusalem, and closed it in on every side? Obedient to the Divine command, they fled to Pella, and thus escaped the judgments then poured out on the devoted city.

"So shall also the coming of the Son of man be."\*

When we turn to lessons of another kind, we discover the same comforting assurance. We meet with an *intimation* of this in the saying of our Lord, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Remove the salt, and destruction ensues. But the parable of the tares and the wheat is more explicit. Though the tares were *first* bound in bundles, in order to be separated from the wheat, the wheat was removed into the barn *before* the tares were burned in the field; and "the field is the world." The same reason which influenced the householder to say to his servants, asking, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them:"

\* "The congregation of the faithful in Jerusalem was commanded by an oracle, revealed to the best approved among them, that, before the wars began, they should depart the city, and inhabit a village beyond Jordan, called Pella, into the which, when the Christians leaving Jerusalem had entered, and the holy men had forsaken the princely and head city of the Jews, together with all the land of Judea, the heavy hand of God apprehended that wicked generation, utterly to root them from among men, which had practised so presumptuously against Christ and his apostles."—*Eusebius, Eccles. Hist.*, ch. v.

would lead him to gather the wheat into his barn before the tares were burned in the field. (Matt. xiii. 28—30.)

Now, from all this, what do we learn? One consistent doctrine: that, before the judgments are poured out upon the world, the saints shall have been taken up, and shall be with the Lord in the air.

I may here be asked to reconcile with this faith, the expression, "But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matt. xxiv. 22.) The elect in that passage, who are found in that "great tribulation," I have long considered to be those "few men" who shall be "left" when "the inhabitants of the earth are burned." (Isa. xxiv. 6.) They shall be chosen in the furnace; and when "by fire and his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isa. lxvi. 15), a remnant shall be saved, whom the Lord will *choose*, i.e., an *elect* remnant.

But it may be further stated, that such a faith is inconsistent with what was revealed to St. John (Rev. xvii. 3—6) respecting the Romish woman, who is there represented, just before her destruction, as "drunken with the blood of the saints."

There are two ways by which this may be reconciled with the foregoing doctrine: the one,



by supposing her to be drunken with the blood which she has already shed, during the long season of 1260 years, in which she has "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;" and as it is expressly said, that when she shall be judged, in her shall be "found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (Rev. xviii. 24), it strengthens this explanation, for it is her judgment which the revealing angel shows to St. John. (Rev. xvii. 1.) And this, therefore, does not necessarily suppose another Papal persecution. But, should this have yet to come upon the visible Church, another method remains, by which this passage may be reconciled with the doctrine which the several Scriptures contain that have been considered.

Hence we must endeavour to realize what will be the condition of the visible Church and of the world after the translation of the saints shall have taken place. That the number of those who shall be changed at the Lord's appearing must be comparatively small, none, I think, can reasonably doubt. But, should such a doubt exist, let the true condition of the visible Church at the present moment be considered, and can the most sanguine calculator venture to say, that he believes one-half of that number to be the real

children of God? Surely none can be so daring. But without descending lower in numerical calculation, this, I think, is sufficient to show the truth of my remark. Now, *should that idea prove correct*, which is entertained by some, that of the comparatively small number of real believers in the visible Church, those only who are in very deed *looking for the Lord's appearing* (Heb. ix. 28), "shall be changed," and taken up to meet the Lord in the air, that number will be yet more reduced. It may, however, be found, that all who partake of justifying faith, of that faith which works by love, shall in that day, of which we speak, partake of the glory then to be revealed. Still the number must be small when compared with that of those who profess only, and who shall be left behind. We learn, from Isa. xxvi. 9, that "when God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants thereof shall learn righteousness." By which we are taught, that during this time of trial, many, who have been previously mere professors, will be savingly converted to Christ. Should it therefore be true, that the Romish woman has yet to go forth on another crusade of persecution against the Church, before she go into perdition, these are they against whom her enmity will be directed, and these are they who, in that season being partakers of living faith,

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will be prepared to seal their testimony with their blood. I mention this as one supposable way by which the difficulty may be removed, though I still prefer the first solution.

Let us now *inquire after the signs of Messiah's Advent.*

Here I would adduce one comprehensive sign, which will be found to involve several within it.

*That the Church and the world are precisely in the condition in which, it was foretold that they should be, when the Lord should come, and that they have not been in this condition before.*

Let us shortly analyze it.

1st. "*The words*" of the vision are no longer "*shut up,*" and "*the book*" is unsealed, by which we know that "*the time of the end*" is come. "*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.*" (Dan. xii. 4.)

Who, that has turned his attention at all to this subject, can deny the fact, that an unprecedented measure of study has of late been bestowed upon the unfulfilled portion of God's word? And those, who are acquainted with the facts of the case, will also add, that a great measure of light has, by the goodness of the Lord, been vouchsafed to those who have been so engaged. Thus

many previously existing difficulties have been removed, and many things, before little understood, have been brought before the minds of men with a convincing clearness, and a force of truth, which could not be resisted. Hence the words of the vision can no longer be said to be shut up; neither can the book be said to be sealed, from which the conclusion is clear, that "the time of the end" has arrived.

2d. Connected with this arrival of "the time of the end," two other signs are given: *that many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased.* "*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*" (Dan. xii. 4.)

There can scarcely be one in this house of the Lord, who has not contributed personally, in some measure, to fulfil the first of these signs. Neither is it confined to our own land: it is the very feature of the days in which we live. The national character, in this respect, appears to be changed, and whereas our fathers were a bold and enterprising people, yet were they of staid and cautious habits, proceeding steadily, but not hastily, towards their selected end. And in all this running to and fro, which prevails on every side, coupled, as it is in this scripture, with "the time of the end," what reasonable mind can deny that we here meet with another proof, that "the time of the end" is come?

Again, the like argument holds good respecting the increase of knowledge. Education is the fashion of the day, by some supposed to be the panacea for every evil, political or moral; and, without confining our remark to our own country, we may confidently assert, that knowledge in general has been greatly on the increase during the last twenty-five years or more. I include in this, knowledge in its various branches, and the multitude of publications which are pouring forth from the teeming womb of the press, sufficiently proves that the importance of such an agency to promote principles of every kind, is well understood. How, again, if these things be so, can we avoid the conclusion, that, this sign passing before our eyes, "the time of the end" must be come?

3d. Another predicted sign is found in the fact, *that the majority of the visible Church, and of those in high places, neglect, and, in some cases, even scoff at the doctrine.*

"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8.)  
 "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,\* and saying, *Where is the promise of his coming?*"

At the first advent of our blessed Lord, a cor-

\* The desire of any carnal or ungodly object may be a "lust;" i. e., there may be a lust of power, or pleasure, or wealth, &c.

responding sign was given. When "the child" (Is. ix. 6) was born in Bethlehem, according to the word of the Lord (Mic. v. 2), what effect was produced upon the visible Church, and upon those in high places in Judea? No heed was given to the fact, it occurred unnoticed. The babe was left in his manger, and Mary and Joseph in their stable! And when "wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him?" expecting, doubtless, that such an event must be in every man's mouth, and that every one's hand in Judea and in Jerusalem could point to the place where the young child was, great must have been their astonishment to find, that no one knew aught concerning him, and that even those who occupied the seat of Moses were as ignorant and unconcerned as the rest! True it is, that "when Herod the king had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;" his jealousy was aroused at the very mention of a "king of the Jews;" hence, with his accustomed cruelty, he unsheathed the sword, "and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," and hence "in Rama was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning: Rachel weeping for her chil-

dren, and would not be comforted, because they were not." (Matt. ii.) But, travel onward in the eventful story of that wondrous man, and inquire after the estimate formed concerning him. "Have any of the Pharisees or of the rulers believed in him?" was the question asked by those in authority. "As for this fellow, we know not whence he is." Compared with the politics of this world, he was nothing, and a thing of naught. His blood was of little worth in the judgment of Caiaphas, and "of the princes of this world;" and hence the counsel, "it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." What was Pontius Pilate's estimate of the worth of the reputed malefactor, compared with his own authority, and how much less was it when placed in the balance with that of Cæsar? "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." Yet, all the while, what was he? The great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh! In his complex person was found the actual development of the deep things of God for man's redemption, the incarnation of the wisdom of God! For him the everlasting doors had lift up their heads that he might go forth from his eternal habitation, on his errand of mercy, to tabernacle

with man: the object of holiest interest to the heavenly hierarchy, whose going forth shook the gates of hell: while man, for whose salvation all this was proceeding, absorbed in the every day occurrences of a dying life, scarce turned aside his head, or lifted up his eyes to see; and if he did, it was but to return with more undivided attention to the things of time and sense which so deeply engrossed him! And now that the word is about to be repeated, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory" may go through, not to appear in the stillness of night in the stable of Bethlehem, but "as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west," to appear "in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels," (Luke ix. 26,) how much heed, I ask, does this obtain from those who occupy the high places of Christendom? The politics of this world are all-absorbing, though God, in mercy, has ordained that this world's politics should contain the very signs which shall mark his approach, "who will come and will not tarry." But this, moreover, we are used to hear as a cogent argument against its truth, that so few believe it. Verily, if all men believed it, I would not; for has not the Lord inquired, "When the Son of man cometh, shall



he find faith in the earth?" by which I must understand faith in that coming.

That scoffers should arise amongst us, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? is but the literal fulfilment of the word of the Lord; and it requires but small acquaintance with what has been proceeding now for some years, to know that this sign, also, has been passing within our hearing.

4th. Beside all these, we may refer to *an unprecedented preaching of the Gospel as a sign of the same event.*

*"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."* (Rev. xiv. 6.)

We find, in this case, a repetition of the sign which had been given by our Lord to mark the approach of judgment upon the house of God of the former dispensation. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv. 14.)

But the preaching or circulation of the Gospel is to be more extensive in the latter case than in the former. The expression "all the world" limits it in the one to the Roman earth, as Luke ii. 1 clearly shews,—“And it came to pass in those

days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." And this, St. Paul informs us, had taken place in his day: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. x. 18.) When we call to mind the exertions which have been making during the last forty years to forward this work, and that the Scriptures have been translated into one hundred and fifty languages or dialects, thus removing, as it were, the curse of Babel, we cannot but acknowledge that this sign also is before our eyes, and that they must be holden if we do not perceive it. But an objection has been raised, to the following effect, that a large part of the earth remains yet to be visited, before any event consequent upon this sign can be expected. We reply, that there must be a considerable portion of the earth unvisited before the Lord's appearing, in order that Isa. lxvi. 19 may be fulfilled, inasmuch as what is there foretold, is to take place after the judgments have been poured out. "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send *those that escape of them* unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles."

Now, if these things be so, and this mystic angel have been pursuing his unwearied flight for so long a period, What follows, when that flight is finished? "The hour of God's judgment is come." (Rev. xiv. 7.)

5th. If we turn to our Lord's prophecy of the signs which shall precede his appearing, we find the following amongst others:—*The sea and the waves roaring, and the powers of the heaven being shaken.*

*"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity: the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."* (Luke xxi. 25, 26.)

By "the sea and the waves," in Scripture, we are instructed, that "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" are intended (Rev. xvii. 15); and the same figure is elsewhere employed. Again, "the powers of the heaven" must, in like manner, be understood to mean, the powers of the political heaven; because when it is said, in the corresponding passage in St. Mark, "And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken" (Mark xiii. 25), the earth being smaller than many of them, it involves an absurdity to suppose that they can literally fall to the earth. And is it not true at

the present hour? Look for your reply to the countries of Europe. Are not "the sea and the waves roaring," and loudly too, in France, in Austria, in Italy, in Germany, and that against "the powers that be?" Are not "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven" are shaken? (Luke xxi. 25, 26.)

Men and brethren, are these things so? If they be, we ask, What follows?

"Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke xxi. 27, 28.)

6th. But I turn for the last sign to *the testimony which the Apocalypse supplies, in reference to the Turkish Empire.*

In Rev. ix. 13, 14, we read, "And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates."

This sixth trumpet, we are taught (Rev. viii. 13), is the second of the three woe-trumpets, which were there foretold. If we proceed to Rev. xi. 14, we read, "The second woe is past; and, behold,

the third woe cometh quickly," and here we find the termination of this second woe-trumpet.

Again, if we look forward to Rev. xvi. 12, we meet with reference once more to the same power, or kingdom, for we read of the same mystical river, the river Euphrates, there specified. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. xvi. 12—14.)

If we can shew, that these predicted events have drawn, or are drawing, to their conclusion, we may repeat our previous inquiry concerning each, What follows? I believe almost all interpreters are agreed upon this point, that Turkey was intended as the scene of these parts of the vision, and the river Euphrates specified in each, has led safely to this conclusion. ["The question being asked in the hearing of Daniel, *Till when shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the desolating transgression, to give both the Sanctuary*

*and the host to be trodden under foot?*" the reply was as follows,—"*Till two thousand three hundred days : then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.*" At the end of the 2300 mystical days, that is, of the 2300 years, "the sanctuary of the Christian Church," (and, I add, the place of the sanctuary of the Jewish Church,) was to be cleansed from the desolating pollution of the Turkish power; the 2300 years must therefore terminate with this sixth vial, the effect of which being poured out upon the great river Euphrates was to be, that "*the water thereof was dried up.*" ] What, we now ask, is the actual condition of Turkey? Is that kingdom to be now described by the swelling flood of "the great river, the river Euphrates?" Or is it not rather to be likened, and that to the very life, to the bed of some mighty stream, the supply of whose waters having been cut off, they have wasted away until men may pass dry-shod over it? There can be no difficulty in replying to this inquiry. The fact is notorious, that for a long season Turkey has not stood in her own strength; but has been dependant upon other powers for her support. And of these props how many are in fact remaining, on which she can rest? Where is France? Where is Austria? Has not Prussia at this moment enough to do to support herself? And, when we consider the feeling which Russia has shown in bygone days

towards Turkey, are we not justified in saying, that, of the five powers which supported her, Great Britain is that one alone to which now she can look with any confidence of help? If these things be so, What must follow? "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xi. 14, 15.) "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Rev. xvi. 15.) Such, then, is the sum of the matter; and if we refer to our Psalm (ver. 16), we find the two parts of our subject indissolubly linked together.

WHEN THE LORD SHALL BUILD UP ZION, HE SHALL APPEAR IN HIS GLORY.

From all of which the soul-stirring conclusion must be drawn—

"THE LORD IS AT HAND."

Of all the truths which have ever been brought before the Church of God, this, of the return of the Lord in glory, is, I conceive, not only the most important, but it is the most weaning. If sorrow be our present portion, it upholds the fainting spirit, and says, "Be patient unto the

coming of the Lord." (James v. 7.) If outward circumstances are gratifying to flesh and blood, and the man is surrounded by many attractive elements, it loosens all. It tells him not to live in these, lest he fail of "the grace which is to be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. i. 13.) Oh, 'tis a precious truth; and whilst the multitude are gainsaying, and professors are slumbering, and the eyes of thousands are held, that they see none of these things in the Scriptures, what an unspeakable privilege, for one so unworthy to have been permitted, not only to see, but to proclaim them, for twenty years and more, and still to lift up the voice in the ears of a drowsy world, and cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!"

I well remember to have heard it said by one who, some years since, was remarking upon these doctrines, "If I could believe what you believe respecting the nearness of the Lord's advent, I would lay in sackcloth and ashes until his appearing." Now, this may be the life of fear, but certainly is not the life of faith. But are such austerities required at our hands by our gracious Lord, or is such the posture in which he expects to find his waiting people? Surely not. Neither has he left us without instruction upon this, as upon all other subjects which are im-



portant to us. When he cometh, he expressly says, that "two shall be in the field: the one shall be taken, the other left." "Two shall be at the mill: the one shall be taken, the other left." "Two shall be in a bed: the one shall be taken, the other left." From which this conclusion is self-evident, that the conscientious discharge of an honest calling, in the fear of the Lord, is the proper place in which to be found by that Lord when he appeareth. I know that such views are inconsistent with the excitement in which some indulge upon this subject, and the very excitement thus produced is sometimes urged as a reason against these doctrines. That they should be exciting is not strange. The stranger thing would be if they were not so, constituted as we are, and deeply and inseparably involved in them. But if such excitement be the only effect produced by them, they fail of their legitimate end, and such excitement is nothing more than a sure symptom of a morbid state of spirit. But the Scriptures are yet more full upon this subject, and afford special directions both to ministers and people. Hence we read, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find

so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods." (Matt. xxiv. 45—47.) And how can we be justly said to give them meat *in due season*, if from any cause whatsoever, whether of supposed expediency, or from the fear of man, we keep back the momentous truth of which we are discoursing? Again, so important does our Lord evidently consider the conduct of his servants at such a time, and on such a subject, that he adds, "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xxiv. 48—51.)

How awful is the warning to the slothful or the faithless minister of the Lord! What a plain announcement is here made that such shall be without excuse in that day!

In Luke xxi. 34, the professing Church meet with their instruction, and this, though peradventure primarily addressed to our people, is full of gracious warning for ourselves: "And

take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."

How well did our Master consider our position in this present evil world! How justly did he appreciate the instruments which Satan effectually employs in every generation, to divert the mind from its proper occupation, and to engage it with trifles! Thus some are assailed with temptation to carnal indulgences of one or of another sort, some to the cares of this world. In either case the spirit of the man is misled. He is turned from the one thing needful. He is not seeking "*first the kingdom;*" and if only he be so found when the day of the Lord shall dawn, that day shall come upon him unawares, and he shall not escape. How important, therefore, is this truth, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

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#### POSTSCRIPT.

IT had been my intention, had the opportunity fairly offered, to have referred to an error into which I had been led some years ago, in the order of events connected with this all-

important subject. But to turn from such doctrines as those which fully engaged us on the above occasion, to what the individual preacher might have previously said or thought on this or that part of the great subject, would have been such a descent from the station which we then occupied, and would have been so comparatively insignificant, that I chose rather to take this opportunity of referring to it. As I have always felt it to be a duty to speak what I believed to be important truth, as a minister of the Lord, so, I trust, that I shall never be backward in acknowledging error, if it be found that I have fallen into it. Indeed, one practical advantage resulting from such a course is clear, that the true amount of error, and no more, is ascertained: whereas, under other circumstances, many run away with false impressions, and attach blame where, in fact, no blame belongs. The particular case, to which I refer, is this:—God has revealed in his Word certain periods, or dates, which were to include the long tribulation of his people Israel, under Gentile oppression. He has also revealed that, when the national conversion and restoration of that people shall take place, it will be “according to the days of their coming out of the land of Egypt” (Micah vii. 15): that, when he shall have mercy on the house of Judah, he “will save them *by the Lord their God*,” and *not* by human agency (Hos. i. 7; Jer. xxiii. 7): from which the conclusion is clear, that, if only we could ascertain the common termination of these periods of Gentile rule and oppression, we should also ascertain the time by which the Lord must appear to do this work. From the internal evidence of one of these revealed numbers, given to Daniel, it appeared that the termination must be A.D. 1847. The termination of the other, given to Moses, dating its commencement from

Manasseh's captivity, terminated, according to different chronologists, within four, three, and one year of the same time. But, the two periods terminating with the same event, they must terminate in the same year; hence the variation in the supposed commencement of the one number is to be corrected by the other, because the other, *being derived from the prophecy itself*, must be true. The unavoidable inference, therefore, *from these premises*, would be, that by the year 1847, the Advent must have taken place. The year 1847, taking the commencement from the Passover, concluded early in April, 1848; and, the Advent not having taken place, many have remarked, that it was the necessary consequence of calculating from Scripture dates, which, it is added, the Father has kept in his own power! I must be permitted to reply, that no error has arisen from this circumstance. The least reflection also must prove, that Scripture dates, *being revealed in the Word*, cannot be among those times and seasons which the Father has kept in his own power; and, being revealed to us, are as sure as every other part of Divine revelation. These revealed numbers, moreover, let it be recollected, have been accurately fulfilled in the several periods which are passed, viz., the first termination of the 1260 years from the rise of Popery in the Christian Church, A.D. 533, to the first French Revolution, in 1793: the 1290 years, from the same period, to the Greek Revolution, in 1823: and the seven Times, or duplication of the 1260 years, as also the 2300 of Daniel, each concluding in the year 1847-8, when the Jew ceased to be a by-word among the nations, and the power of the persecutor had come to an end. *In all of these cases revealed numbers have proved a sure guide.* Whence, then, it will be asked, did the error arise? The

error arose from this,—that a previous ingathering of Judah, in an unconverted state, into Judea and Jerusalem, must take place, which is the necessary inference from Zech. xii. 10; because, when the Lord shall appear for their deliverance, as there foretold, their repentance and conversion are foretold also. Had this formed a part of the argument it would have altered the conclusion; and this omission it was, and *this only*, which occasioned the error, that I take this opportunity of publicly acknowledging. But, who can venture to say, *How soon the Lord may not come*. The review of the signs which are to mark his coming, with which we have been engaged in the foregoing discourse, may well excite us to lift up our heads, looking out for the sign of the Son of man in the heavens, in the faith that our redemption draweth nigh. Here I thankfully acknowledge the great goodness of God, in having enabled and permitted me to bring forward, for so many years, the all-important truths of our Lord's speedy return in glory, in which I must believe that this generation is so vitally concerned.

W. W. P.

NOTE.—It may be desirable here to remark that, although, at p. 248, I have distinguished between the two announcements, made by St. Matt. xxiv. 30, of the appearing of the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and of the coming which is next revealed, whereas the brother who preceded me has not made the same distinction, at p. 206, the two statements agree in representing the Son of man as the sign.

## LECTURE VIII.

### ISRAEL'S WELCOMING THE ONCE REJECTED MESSIAH.

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BY THE HON. AND REV. LELAND NOEL, M.A.,  
VICAR OF EXTON.

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✦ PSALM CXVIII. 22—26.

*“ The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”*

THOUGH the Jews are still a disowned people, hardened in unbelief, the Scriptures show that they are not cast away. “I say, then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid: for *I* also am

an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath *not* cast away his people which he foreknew." (Rom. xi. 1.) When they crucified their Lord, and so filled up the measure of their sins, God cast them out of their land, and made them to wander a reproach in all other lands; and ever since they have been an afflicted, oppressed people, and the face of their God hidden from them. But in all their long sorrows, the fruit of sin, they have never been forgotten (as God's keeping them and their land so distinct from all other people and other lands shows), and Palestine having no proper owner, and Israel not being lost among the nations, does not this tell us they are kept for one another, and that the land will yet have its own people again, and the people their land; and God give them to repent and believe, and at length experience *all* the mercy promised?

"In a small moment have I forsaken thee, and in a little wrath hid I my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." (Isaiah xliv. 7, 8.) These words reveal to us that the Jews are *still* beloved, though forsaken; and therefore, notwithstanding all their unbelief and other sins, God will, for his own blessed name's sake, one day receive them back again. "Thus



saith the Lord, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord, *If* my covenant be not with day and night, and *if* I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, *then* will I cast away the seed of Jacob." (Jer. xxxiii. 24, 25.) "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an ephod; but afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord, and David *their* king." (Hosea iii. 4.) And St. Paul says, in Rom. xi., "And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be graffed in; for God is able to graff them in again." It may seem impossible to us, that a people so scattered and lost should all be gathered again, and those so hardened against Jesus of Nazareth, be seen nationally seeking and welcoming Him; but that which is impossible in man's account, how possible with God! and not only possible, but attended with no difficulty whatever. "Thus saith the Lord, If it be marvellous in this people's eyes, should it be also marvellous in *mine* eyes?" (Zech. viii. 6.) God, who promises to bring His people back, is as wondrous in power as He is in

His Love; and so, *whatever* difficulties there are in the way, as surely as night succeeds day, and day night, God will perform His truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Israel which He hath sworn from the days of old (Micah vii. 20), and Israel will come to their land, and there repent and seek their King; and then that King will appear, and they will hail Him, and openly declare their faith, in singing those songs which Scripture has prepared for their use, and to one of which (Psalm cxviii.), the passage upon which I am this evening permitted to speak, belongs.

This Psalm, which is evidently a prophetic one, and intended to express what Israel will feel when they see Christ, begins with a call to thank the Lord for a deliverance just wrought for them out of the hand of their enemies; and what is this but that last deliverance which Jesus will vouchsafe when they are gathered once more to their own land, and all the nations are come to make a spoil of them? The Scriptures seem to shew, that previous to their conversion as a nation, many of the children of Israel will, in God's providence, come to Judea and settle in it, and that God giving them rest and security there, they will become rich, and have cattle, and goods, and gold, and silver in abundance. But this will not be the *full* mercy God has in store for them; for they

will be still a sinning people—self-righteous, unbelieving, ungrateful, abusing the prosperity granted them, and persecuting the few among them who do believe. And so there will come their *last* trouble foretold, “Behold, I will gather all nations against Jerusalem, to battle, and the city shall be taken, and half of it shall go into captivity, and in all the land two parts therein shall be cut off, and I will bring the third part through the fire and try them.” (Zech. xiii. and xiv.)

And the same judgment is foretold in Ezekiel (chap. xxxviii.), where Jehovah addresses the wicked head (whoever he may be) who gathers the nations. “Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee; and thou shalt think an evil thought, and say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, to those at rest, and that dwell safely, to take a spoil, to take a prey, to turn thy hand upon a people gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, and thou shalt come up against my people Israel,” &c. But God will not leave them in his hands. “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacob’s trouble: *but he shall be saved out of it.*” (Jer. xxx. 7.)

It is to this deliverance, then, that the Psalm refers. Israel is in distress: the nations are all destroying this, God's people, and making their city and country desolate, and there is none to help, no one but the Lord Himself. So in their extremity they cry to Him, their as yet unknown Messiah, to come and rescue them. "Oh, that thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down, to make thy name known, that the nations may tremble at thy presence. Behold, see, we beseech thee: we are all thy people. Be not wroth very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever;" and then, with a mercy beyond their hopes, the Messiah comes, and instantly the nations (their adversaries) perish.

"I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me. He is become my salvation. He chastened, but he hath not given me over to death. All nations compassed me about; yea, they compassed me: they compassed me about like bees: *they are quenched as the fire of thorns.*" Then, after foretelling their deliverance, the Psalm shows how Israel will know Him who delivers them; and finding Him to be no other than Jesus, the Messiah they have so long rejected, they will sing, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner."

This figure of a foundation-stone was one under which the Messiah had been predicted in

Isaiah xxviii. 16, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone; a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." The Messiah, whenever He should come, was to be one mighty to save, for He was to be *Immanuel*; uniting in Himself the two natures of God and of man. "They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matt. i. 23.) The object of this union of the two natures, was to fit Him for being the Saviour needed; for while, as *man*, He would be able to obey the law for us and suffer, as *God* his sufferings and obedience would have infinite merit attaching to them; and so there would be salvation for us, and a sure foundation formed for that spiritual building which God intended to raise from among men, to the glory of His grace. As soon, then, as the time for this was come, God sent forth the Messiah promised; and this Messiah was his own Son, born as to the flesh in Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth; and called, according to the naming of the angel before his birth, *Jesus*. (Luke ii. 21.) And that this Messiah, the Stone, was Jesus, is declared by Peter, in Acts iv. "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said, Ye rulers of the people, be it known to you, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, even by Him doth this man

stand here whole. *This is the stone* which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Jesus was God as well as man; fulfilling in himself that Scripture, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and his name shall be called *the mighty God*;" and the Father bore testimony to his divinity, and so did angels and evil spirits; and the wondrous works Jesus wrought, and the *obedience* which *Creation* was ever ready to render to Him. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" The Stone, then, laid in Zion was *Jesus of Nazareth*, the (reputed) son of Joseph. (John i. 45.) And the time when Jehovah laid it was, when, after having manifested Him in the flesh, and given Him up to death, He raised and exalted Him to His own right hand. Then He became a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins; and salvation being proclaimed in His name and at His bidding, believers find Him their rock; and resting on this their sure foundation, are builded together, a habitation of God, through the Spirit. (Eph. ii. 22.)

"To whom coming, as to a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." But while some thus come to

Christ, and make Him their foundation, many more disbelieve, and this was the case with Israel when Jesus was first preached to them. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the *Jews* a stumbling-block;" and so it had been prophesied, (Isaiah viii. 14,) "And He (the Messiah) shall be a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence to both the houses of Israel." The Jews in our Lord's time were an oppressed people, and they wanted a temporal deliverer, a Messiah who would show Himself a King at once, and ready and able to rescue them from their oppressors; and then they were a self-righteous corrupt people, who could not bear the humbling holy truths which came from Jesus's lips; and so, not finding Him to be what they wished, they rejected Him, saying, "We know that God spake by Moses. As for this man, we know not whence He is." (John ix. 29.) The Jews had the Scriptures, and they should have known that the Messiah was to come, as Jesus did, in *Humiliation*; that there were to be *two* advents, and before coming as a King to reign, He was to come first to *suffer*. But because this truth was not acceptable to them, they would not consider the Scriptures which revealed it, and dwelling only upon those which spake of the Messiah's *glory* and power, when they saw how poor and lowly the Lord

Jesus was, assuming no power, they would not believe Him to be what He said. "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him, and said, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a *man*, makest thyself *God*." (John x. 31, 32.) Then, after rejecting Him as a deceiver, they at length procured His death: "And they were instant, with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified, and their voices prevailed."

But if the Jews thus killed their Messiah, they could not destroy Him, for if He came to die, He came also to *live* after dying, and to have a kingdom and glory given Him as the fruit of His death. So, after laying in the grave the appointed time, Jesus rose again. Thus all the efforts of the Jews and their rulers against the Stone being laid, instead of hindering only furthered the laying of it, and Jesus by dying became the foundation promised; and not only was He made the foundation of God's Church, but also its top stone. "The Stone is made the head of the corner." Jesus is the beginning and the ending, the first and the last. Is He the foundation on which the Church rests? the sinner's one and only hope, to whom we owe it that God has taken and hewn and made us lively stones of His temple, (if, indeed, it is so with us,) then all



the *glory* of this is also His; and, just as the top-stone in a building has the pre-eminence, so because Jesus humbled himself as the Son of man, He was set on high; far above all power and every name that is named, and given to be head over all things to the Church. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour," (Heb. ii. 9,) and "given a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ *is Lord*," &c. (Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.)

Jesus, then, being the Stone laid in Zion, and made Head of the Corner, the Jews will, one day, be brought to acknowledge this. At present He is their stumbling-block, and they cannot bear His name; but as surely as the Psalm in which the text is, is written by inspiration of God, and intended to be the expression of their feelings one day towards Christ, so surely will they experience the feelings described in it, and own Jesus of Nazareth to be their glorious King and Lord. "The Stone which the builders refused, is become the Head of the Corner."

And they will see it to be *God's* work. "This is *the Lord's* doing." Our redemption by Jesus Christ, brethren, is a thing which we

sinners could never have asked of God for ourselves, or even ventured to *think* of; neither could angels have conceived or asked it for us. It originated with *God himself*, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to *His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself*." "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the *purpose of Him who worketh* all things *after the counsel of His own will*." (Eph. i.)

So, too, as the Lord Jesus, becoming a man to redeem us was *God's* work, the planning of His own infinite wisdom and love, it was also *accomplished* by Him. *God* prepared the Son a *body*, as it is written (Heb. x. 5); and *upheld* Him as Son of man. Did the Lord Jesus never *fail* in His work, but went on obeying and suffering for us, till He could say, It is finished? The power which upheld Him was that which the *Father* supplied. "Behold my servant, whom *I* uphold; mine elect: I have put my Spirit upon Him. He shall not fail." (Isaiah xlii. 1.) And then, when He died as man, it was Jehovah's power which raised Him. "*Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou*

suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Then it is written again, "This Jesus hath God raised up." (Acts ii. 32.) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know that *God* hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ, being exalted by the right hand of *God*." (Vers. 33, 36.) And *Israel* will ere long see and own this,—"*This is the Lord's* doing." As yet they account Him a deceiver, and not sent of God; and their feeling is, that, if a *Jew* acknowledges Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, he, in so doing, renounces the God of his fathers; but so soon as God's mercy visits them, they will then learn how He came in Jehovah's name, and that His coming and dying, and then rising again, was all by *His* appointment, and the fruit of the *Father's* love; and therefore, that whoever honours the Son, honours the Father who sent Him.

Then, when *they* learn this, the text shows it will be their wonder,—"*It is marvellous in our eyes.*" And how can it be otherwise? Oh, what a marvel,—redemption! God, in order to redeem us, actually assuming our nature! Oh, when we think who and what the redeemed are, how strange that God should give His own beloved Son to die for us! and raise Him again, and set Him at His own right hand, in order that

He might be our Saviour, and give us repentance and forgiveness, and intercede for us, and send forth the Spirit to sanctify and prepare us for glory! And then, how wondrous! Jesus consenting to die! The Lord of all things! the Son of God, by whom all things were created! Oh, what humiliation, brethren, the taking our nature into His own, and making Himself so one with us, as that Scripture could compare Him to a corner-stone, and us, His people, to stones built upon Him! And what a further marvel, His making this union an everlasting one! Jesus is, we know, *still* in our nature, and gone to heaven with that *very body* in which He suffered, intending that it should be for ever one with His Divine nature! Thus He is for ever the Son of man, and for ever a Brother to us, loving us with the closest love.

Dear brethren, God's works are all marvels, as it is written, Job v. 9, "God doeth great things, and unsearchable; marvellous things without number." But of all the wonders which He has shown, none are so wondrous as this,—Jesus loving us so, as for ever to bear the form of the Son of man for our sake. "Great is the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) This mystery, then, will, in God's good time, be marvellous to His

people. They will no longer put it from them as an imposture, but see and believe and wonder at it, as an inconceivable truth, that the great God, the Messiah, now come to save them, is Jesus, who was crucified, the very Nazarene who was so long the object of their hatred and scorn.

Then the text goes on to show how a day is coming which finds Israel a rejoicing people, and uttering words which the Lord said they *should* utter, whenever they should next see Him. (Matt. xxiii. 39.) "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save, now, I beseech thee, O Lord. O Lord, send now prosperity. Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The day here referred to is evidently the day of Christ; the day of His appearing and kingdom, when He takes to Himself His great power, and reigns. This day is spoken of in Scripture as the day of the Lord, *that day*, the great day of God Almighty. And Jehovah is said to have made it, because He has appointed the time *when* it is to be. "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that *Man* whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 31.) This day is unknown to us, as it regards the time when it

*begins*, for God wills that this time should be known only to Himself; and because it is delayed, sinners doubt and disbelieve, and say, Where is the promise of it? But He who has ordained, will at last bring it on; and as it will not come *sooner* than He has fixed, so, not an instant after, “He that shall come *will* come, and will not tarry.” The day, then, of the Lord’s appearing, seems to be the day meant in the text. And it is the day of *the Son of man*; that is, the Lord Jesus will come in the *flesh*, come *personally*,—the Son of man, and just as He was seen going to heaven. (Acts i. 11.) He will come in His glory, and bright, beyond the brightness of the sun; *but* He will nevertheless be the man Christ Jesus; and no other than Him whom St. John saw in Patmos, and heard say, “I am he who liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.” (Rev. i. 18.)

And when He so comes, He will come to *rule*. “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” (Rev. xix.) So in Dan. vii. it is written, “I saw and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds, and there was

given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom." According to these and similar Scriptures, our Lord comes next as *King*; and, first, He will be *King over Israel*. This was the angel's assurance before His birth. "And the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over *the house of Jacob*." Then, in Ezekiel xxxvii. 22, 24, it is promised, "I will make Israel one nation upon the mountains of Israel, and *one king* shall be king to them all; and David my servant (the Lord Jesus) shall be king over them." So, too, He is to be *King of kings*,—King of the whole earth. When the Lord comes again, He comes to shake the nations, and overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and then to establish in their place His own kingdom; and this, being one of righteousness and peace, is never to pass away,—“whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms: and it shall stand for ever.” (Dan. vii. 27; ii. 44.)

Whenever, then, the Lord shall have appeared for all this, and His day have come, the Jews will be prepared to *rejoice* in it; and the reason is, it will be the day of God's final full mercy to them. Listen, brethren, to a few of the promises God has made in reference to this:—“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a

new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; and they shall be my people; and they shall all know me: and I will gather them out of all countries, and bring them again to this place. And I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me; and I will rejoice over them, to do them good. And like as I have brought all this evil upon them, so will I bring upon them *all* the good promised." (Jer. xxxi. and xxxii.)

"Therefore, fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and restore health to thee. And because they called thee an outcast, behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and the city shall be built upon her own heap; and out of them shall proceed thanksgiving." (Jer. xxx.) "And I will save my flock, and they shall be no more a prey. And I will set up one shepherd over them, even my servant David. And there shall be showers of blessing; and they shall know that I their God am with them." (Ezek. xxxiv.) Then again in Ezek. xxxvi. God promises, "I will take you from among the heathen, and bring you into your own land; and then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, and I will take away the stony heart, and give you a new heart, and put



my spirit within you ; and I will call for the corn, and increase it, and multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, and they shall say, The land which was desolate is become like the garden of Eden." Then it is written further in Isa. li. and Isa. liv.: "The Lord shall comfort Zion ; He shall comfort all her waste places ; joy and gladness shall be found therein," &c. "Oh thou afflicted and tossed with tempest, behold, thou shalt be established in righteousness, and *all* thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace." "For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon *thee*, and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob ; the sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light to thee, but the *Lord* shall be thy light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." Then God says in another Scripture He will comfort them as a mother comforts, and extend peace to them as a river, and rejoice over them with joy, and *rest* in his love.

What promises are these, brethren, written with many others equally large and overflowing in God's Word ! and because they are written there, "they are graven," as Job says, "with an iron

pen, and written in the rock for ever." "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will *perform* that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah." (Jer. xxxiii. 14.) It is the recollection, then, and the experience of these, God's sure promises, which will make Christ's day such gladness to them. *Before* it comes, they are a sinful, suffering people, unconverted, unblest; but *now* all is blessing, and Jesus binds up their wounds, brings them health and a cure, and gives them to know Him as their Messiah and love Him, and He sets His throne and tabernacle among them, and becomes their King.

How well, then, may they hail the day which gives them to realize this, and say, "This is the day the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!" and then they will sing to Him whose day it is, and who comes to fulfil all the good promises, and say, Blessing upon Him who comes to us! Now we own Him our King, the Messiah, God's everlasting Son! He was once our scorn,—the stone at which we stumbled, and we would not have him to reign over us; but now, blessing, and glory, and honour, and power, and might to Him, the great God! and we acknowledge him such, and beseech Him to bless us. Save us, O Lord, we beseech thee. O Lord,

send us now the prosperity promised. Oh, be to us all that thou art come to be, and accomplish all the mercy promised, and be our King, and reign also over the whole earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords!

In this way, when Jesus is revealed to them, will Israel welcome Him and the day which brings Him, and beseech Him for themselves and others; and that all the ends of the earth may know, and fear, and love, and enjoy the blessings of subjection to Him: and what joy will this their faith and love cause them, and the thought of all that which their Lord is about to do for them! And this their joy will be all the greater from their remembering the past, and contrasting their Lord's ways *now* towards them with their ways towards Him, and their long scorn and hatred of Him in past times, and their refusing to believe, and their wicked blasphemies of His blessed name generation after generation. Oh, how this will now, while it affects and shames, be a source also of inconceivable joy, as revealing a love which would not be overcome, but went on pitying and bearing with them, and making their Lord of one unchanging mind and purpose towards them; and bringing him at length to return to, and bless, and dwell among them, and that not for a time, but from henceforth and for ever. Oh, what joy this!

an eternal forgetting of the past in return for all their unbelief, blessing them with a love, and favour, and communion with Him that is never to know an end ! “ The Lord shall be thine *everlasting* light ; ” “ thy sun shall *no more* go down,” and “ I will make an *everlasting* covenant with them, that I will not *turn away* from them to do them good,” and “ I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for *evermore*, and my servant David shall be their prince *for ever*, neither will I hide my face from them any more, for I have poured out upon them my Spirit.” Oh, what a feeling this ! God their God, and they His people for evermore, and no end to come to that day which has now risen upon them : and how will it be all the more joyous from the long night which has preceded it ! Brethren, when our nights are weary, sleepless ones, how welcome the dawn which ends them ; and what will the rising of Israel’s Sun be to them *after their* long night ?

“ When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, then were we like them that dream ; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy.” (Ps. cxxvi.) Yes, in that day, when Jesus makes Himself known, and shows them a mercy so far exceeding all their hopes, what untold joy will there be among them, and loud continual shouts of adoration and praise ! “ Cry

out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One in the midst of thee." (Isa. xii. 6.) "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart; the Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more." (Zeph. iii.)

Then, lastly, the Jews will rejoice in the day of Christ, because of the glory it will bring to Him their Lord in the conversion of the *world*.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and *all* nations shall flow to it. And many people shall say, Come ye, and let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob: and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and He shall judge among the nations." (Isa. ii. 2, 3, 4.) "And in that day the Lord shall be king over all the earth." (Zech. xiv. 9.) And the Scriptures seem to show, in reference to these predictions, that the instruments to be employed in bringing them about are the Jews themselves now converted as a nation: "But *ye* shall be named the priests of the Lord, and they shall call you the *ministers* of our God." (Isa. lxi. 6.)

“And I will send the *remnant* that escape (*i. e.*, the holy remnant who survive the last trouble) to the nations, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.” (Isa. lxvi. 19.) What joy, then, will there be to Israel, not only seeing their Lord’s kingdom prevailing every where, but also through *their* instrumentality, and God himself vouchsafing to employ *them* everywhere as His ministers to teach and convert the nations!

In the day of the Lord, Israel will, as we have seen, be a converted people, filled with the Spirit; they will, therefore, be a *devoted* people, burning with love and zeal: and so, like as they have hated Jesus and His cause in times past, it will be equally and yet more their delight *now* to minister *for* them, and thus they will form a Mission to the Heathen such as the world has never yet witnessed, and preaching Jesus and Him crucified, and declaring all the wonders He has wrought in their behalf, *all* kings shall fall down before Him, and all nations serve Him, and that Scripture, in Rom. xi., receive its accomplishment.

“If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, what shall the RECEIVING of them be *but life from the dead?*” Let the truth, then, revealed in this question delight and animate us,

Christian brethren, in regard to *Israel* and the *world*. At present, how comparatively vain all efforts to evangelize them! There are, indeed, conversions, and missionaries do not labour without seeing, sooner or later, God's blessing upon their labours; but, compared with the millions *not* converted, how few are blessed in being really brought to Christ! But the Deliverer will come; and then it will not be a few only, but *all* Israel that will be saved, *and all* the nations, and Jesus the Lord be King of the whole earth. Let the promises of God, then, in regard to this, stir us up to unceasing prayer that He would accomplish it. "I will for this be *inquired* of," God says, "to do it for them." And so in Isa. lxii. 7, God bids us, as many as are His remembrancers and rely on His promise, to "give Him no rest, till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

This command shows how acceptable to God such continual prayer for Israel is. So, too, the *importuning* Him, in regard to their conversion, is to do what our Lord Himself is now doing. For what does he say, Isa. lxii. 1? "For Zion's sake will *I* not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, till the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

As we would be like our Lord, then, let us not at any time forget the spiritual interests of His people; especially when we know how connected they are with the spiritual interests of the whole world. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," the Psalmist says. "If I forget thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." (Ps. cxxxvii.) Does the Christian Jew feel thus, and pray that his powers of speech may be withheld, should they not be employed in intercession for his brethren and God's people (because then they are in some measure wasted and misimproved), let us seek to *share* with Him in the feeling thus expressed. Oh! do we love Jerusalem? Let us more and more sympathize with her. She is an outcast! Let us mourn for her. There are signs of God's mercy returning to her, and she begins to feel it is so. Let us *rejoice* with her. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." (Isa. lxvi. 10.)

And, brethren, whatever of this sympathy we feel, let it be *proved* and exercised as well as felt; and keep us stedfastly to the duty of pleading God's promises to Israel and beseeching Him to fulfil them. When God says in prophecy, He will



bring His people again, He bids the chief of the nations make this a subject of *prayer*; and while they sing with Jacob because of the good coming to them, at the same time to intreat for them. "Thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, *and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth . . . He that scattered Israel will gather him.*" (Jer. xxxi. 7, 8, 10.)

Dear brethren, what encouragement have we at this time to intercede for Israel, as commanded, in the change which God seems now bringing about, as well in their *own* religious feelings, as in the treatment they meet with from the nations. Listen to some of the confessions and prayers they now make before God in their public worship:—"We are more sinful than any other people. We ought to be ashamed more than any nation. We have sinned. But now, Lord, look down from heaven, and cause the Messiah speedily to appear; and according to thine own promise, sprinkle clean water upon us. Oh! our God, we have no High Priest, no sacrifice, no temple, no Shechinah; but we look for thy free mercy, for thou art gracious. Righteousness

belongs to thee, but to us confusion. What can we say? or how shall we be justified before our God? We will seek to return to thee, for thy right hand is stretched out to receive the penitent. Thou hearest them, for thy tender mercies' sake. We come before thee poor and needy; do not send us empty away; for thou hast made us. Oh! have mercy! Do this for thine own Name's sake; for thy name is gracious and merciful!"

Oh! is God thus teaching them by His Spirit to seek Him? Then let us add our prayers to theirs; and while (during this dispensation of mercy to us Gentiles) we unite with others in seeking to gather in the election from among them to Christ, let us be ever obeying God's command, not to give Him rest till *all* His mercy has been shown them, and the Lord is returned to Zion, and has made it his holy mountain, and Jerusalem a city of truth, and given it the name promised, Jehovah-Shammah, *The Lord is there.* (Ezek. xlviii. 35.)

Lastly, dear brethren, in the day when the Lord appears for Israel, and His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives, Oh! that we and all our friends may then be found *with* Him! "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight; and his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives,

which is before Jerusalem on the east: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Oh! that we may be among these, and grace be given to make us Jesus's faithful, watching servants; who look for their Lord, and live separate from sin and from all that is inconsistent with His service; so that as the great day dawns, and ere it is fully come with all its awful realities, we may be safe gathered to where our Lord first manifests Himself; and so be seen at length descending with Him, to be witnesses of Israel's joy, and sharers in it, and in a joy, too, perhaps higher than theirs, even that of the Lord Himself!

"His Lord said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the *joy of thy Lord*."

## LECTURE IX.

### THE DOMINION OF THE SECOND ADAM OVER ALL CREATION.

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#### PSALM VIII. 1.

*“ O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all  
the earth ! ”*

Thus begins and ends a purely millennial Psalm. It opens with the single voice of the royal harper: its close is for the grand chorus of the universe.

It would seem, from the language of this and the five preceding Psalms, that they constitute a devotional service for a mystic season of twenty-four hours. The third Psalm being a morning prayer, emblematical of the dawn of the spiritual kingdom. The fourth, an evening supplication

after a day of deep trial, such as was the day of Christ's humiliation. The next two Psalms are the breathings of a believer's soul during the watches of a wakeful night; and the seventh and eighth, the outpourings of adoring love at the early dawn of the second morning; having a prophetic aspect to the opening of the day of the Lord, on which He will "awake to judgment," "enter the strong man's house, bind the strong man, and spoil him of his goods."

Whatever obscurity may rest on this view, there is none respecting the eighth Psalm. That is a hymn in celebration of Immanuel's glory, when He shall come in his kingdom to exercise dominion over all creation. We have the sanction of the New Testament for thus understanding it.

1. Our Lord quotes the second verse, on the occasion of his taking possession of his temple, as a prophecy of his triumph over the kingdom of Satan. He called the attention of the Chief Priests and Scribes to the hosannas of the children who followed him, as the beginning of its fulfilment. When the weak and despised things of the world are thus taught of God to sing the praises of their King in the face of his adversaries, there is a proof that Satan's dominion is shaken,

and a pledge to the Church that her enemy shall one day be driven from his throne :—"The prey taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered." But,—

2. We are favoured with a commentary by the Holy Spirit himself on that part of the Psalm which forms our portion to-night. By comparing verses 4, 5, 6 with Heb. ii. 6—9, and 1 Cor. xv. 27, we learn that David is here prophetically celebrating the glories of Immanuel's Person, and the establishment of his kingdom over all the earth, where He must reign in righteousness till every enemy shall be subdued.

We enter, then, on the consideration of the Psalm with the advantage of an infallible Commentator ; and, under His teaching, proceed to deal with it as a song of the Redeemer's millennial triumph ; having particular regard to the world which we inhabit, whose especial exigencies furnish the occasion for such a wondrous manifestation of the wisdom and love of Jehovah. Let our earnest prayer be, that the Holy Spirit would guide us into all needful truth, and "show us things to come." We consider, 1. *The dominion which the first Adam received and lost.* 2. *The dominion which will be restored to Christ, the second Adam.* 3. *Some practical improvement.*

1. The dominion which the first Adam received

and lost. Scanty, indeed, are the records of creation's birth-day: yet the little which is graciously revealed is eminently fitted to exalt our thoughts of God. What finite mind can conceive the grandeur of that shining host which was assembled to witness the creation of the heaven and the earth! Ere its foundation was laid, the sons of God were summoned to be spectators of a new manifestation of the glory of the Triune Jehovah. Doubtless Satan "came also among them," and saw with envy that the new being who was to govern the earth was made in the image of God, whom he feared and hated. And while "the sons of God shouted for joy," as the darkness rolled from the face of the deep, and the transcendent beauty of the creation was unfolded, the bosom of the condemned fiend was already secreting the venom which, as he hoped, would poison its life-blood for ever.

Each successive step in the work of creation was so ordered as to throw the greatest spiritual light which finite minds could receive on the character and benevolent purposes of God. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (Rom. i. 20.) The co-eternal Three stood forth revealed in their distinctive excellences. The Father willing and

approving: the Word commanding and, in one sense, creating: the Spirit producing, "garnishing," (Job xxvi. 13,) and giving life and loveliness to the whole. When God said, "Let *us* make man in our image, after our likeness," the Trinity imparted to him "the breath of *lives*,"—three separate existences—body, soul, and spirit,—in all of which man is gifted with distinct powers of serving, enjoying, and magnifying his Creator. By virtue of this natural likeness to God, man was vested with authority over the rest of the creation. He was a sovereign, because he was made in the similitude of God, and exercised dominion over the earth as his representative. (1 Cor. xi. 7.)

The form of Adam's inaugural grant of the kingdom, runs in the very words in which the Psalmist ascribes the predestinative dominion of the restored creation to the Second Adam. I name this out of its place, because it is important to mark that Adam held a two-fold character. In the larger details of Genesis ii. 7, 8, a distinction is made between the earth, out of which Adam was formed, and the garden which was subsequently planted and distinguished by its two sacramental trees, wherein he was placed. He was to *keep* the one, to *subdue* the other. It would thus appear that the dominion over the



common earth, whence he was taken, and whither he was afterwards driven, was given to him as the natural root or parent stock of the human race; while the garden of the Lord was a separate grant to the federal head of the first manhood. As the authoritative ruler and priest in the Church of Eden, he held a public legal representative character; so that, when the likeness of God was defaced, the sceptre forfeited, and the priesthood lost, and he was driven forth in disgrace, "to till the ground from whence he was taken," all his descendants were necessarily involved in the curse pronounced upon him.\*

It is on the ground of this federal headship that St. Paul draws the instructive parallel between Christ and Adam. (Rom. v. 12, 21; and 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.) They were the first and second man in a sense which belongs to no other man,—in a representative sense: and so it was that sin and death passed on all by the disobedience of one, and life and righteousness was obtained for all by the obedience of the other. Thus Adam was, in his public character, "the

\* A writer of much originality and research, concludes that what Eden was to the earth under the Adamic dispensation, Jerusalem will be to the rest of the world under the reign of Christ on the earth.—*Duke of Manchester's Finished Mystery*, p. 131.

figure of Him that was to come ; " and his investment of the headship over all creation, is the assurance as well as the illustration of that more perfect dominion over a restored creation, which has been won by the spotless obedience of the Son of man, and will be openly revealed at his Second Advent.

The Divine life and likeness which was lost in Adam, was indeed far more abundantly restored in Christ. Spiritually, it is already renewed in the souls of the elect, by the operation of the Holy Ghost ; but for the full " adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, we wait " till the Omnipotent Conqueror comes back to this world. Then He will " make these vile bodies " of sin and death, meet companions for the regenerate soul, by making them " like unto his own glorious body."

With this important fact of Adam's holding the government of the earth as a covenant head, we proceed to speak of the forfeiture of his kingdom.

Perfect as the creation was, there was nothing to shield it from the assaults of the tempter ; and though Adam was exactly fitted for his post, and for the enjoyment of complete happiness, by virtue of his union with God ; still he was of necessity in a state of moral probation. He was

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“ of the earth, earthy,” and therefore liable to change, and so within the reach of ruin. The proof of his holiness, or oneness of mind with his Maker, was a willing obedience to the command given. Confidence in God was the source of his joy. Yet, as his vision was limited, there was room for the exercise of faith, and therefore for the admission of doubt. Here was the opening at which the adversary entered the hitherto undefiled sanctuary of the human heart. “ Yea, hath God said so ? ” You cannot have understood him rightly ; it will be safer to take my interpretation of his Word,—“ Ye shall not surely die ; ” yea, the fruit of this very tree ( as God knows ) will open your eyes, and enable you to praise Him in a higher strain. Thus was Adam tempted to seek wisdom independently of its only pure source ; and from the moment the precept was broken, he shared in the Satanic conspiracy against the Monarch of the universe, and all harmony between them was thenceforth destroyed. Hitherto everything had been desirable and pleasant to Adam, only in so far as it bore a relation to the Creator whom he loved ; and every object that he saw had furnished an open channel of communication to his soul of the manifold grace of Jehovah. The severing of this tie of loving subjection brought over the

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whole man, in a moral sense, just such a withering blight as the blotting out of the sun would bring upon the face of nature. The law of love in his heart and conscience, gave place to the bondage of fear and hatred. Darkness and desolation and woe, and a three-fold death, fell with a crushing weight upon the parent stock and public representative of our race. God the Son walked no more with him in Paradise, but drove him forth to labour in the wilderness for his daily bread. God the Father looked no longer with complacency on the works which he had pronounced "good;" and God the Holy Ghost fled from his defiled temple, and came no more to man as his abiding comforter and sanctifier, till He alighted on the head of the second Adam—even "the Holy One of God," as he came up from the waters of baptism. The whole creation shared the curse, and became "subject to vanity," by reason of man's fall. The fountain was poisoned, and the streams yielded only corruption and death. Instant annihilation would have spoken no other lesson to the universe than that of inflexible justice; it would have left unsolved the problem of existing disturbance. Instead, therefore, of ending the rebellion at once, the Creator is so dealing with it as to make it subserve more gracious designs of goodness to his

people. The shadow of that dark cloud is passing across our world, only that its dispersion by the Sun of Righteousness may spread over a regenerate creation lovelier hues of glory. That the adversary obtained the principality of this world was no disappointment to the omniscient mind, nor any real derangement of his eternal plan. This earth was to be the platform on which mighty Intelligences are even now the wondering spectators of a conflict between the antagonist principles of good and evil, the issue of which will display such a depth of wisdom and love as no creature could otherwise have comprehended. The Infinite and Eternal is unfolding "the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. iii. 9, 10.)

Dear brethren, let us not "be overcome of evil," since our heavenly Father is overruling it for good,—turning the very curse which he pronounced on the earth into a blessing, causing mercy to rejoice against judgment, and so "stilling<sup>e</sup> for ever the enemy and the avenger." "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

2. The dominion which will be restored to Christ, the second Adam.

Here the channel of our subject flows more narrowly. The Scripture which we are considering limits us to the nature and extent of that kingdom which Jesus is gone to receive of the Father, and at his return will establish over all the earth. The Psalmist, in quoting the words of the original grant of creation-sovereignty to the first Adam, declares that they are applicable to the second Adam, when He shall come in his glory to take "the uttermost parts of the earth" under his righteous sway.

The strains in which David celebrates the earthly dominion of the Redeemer, are evidently suggested by the scenes about him. His flocks lay slumbering in the valley beneath; everything around him was hushed in the solemn stillness of a summer night beneath an eastern sky. As he gazed with adoring rapture on the heavens studded with stars, and the moon moving in silent majesty above him, he beheld in these visible works of creation signs of far greater wonders in redemption; and, with a heart overflowing with praise, he breaks out in the words of this Psalm, "O Lord," maker and monarch of all these wonders:—"our Lord," brought nigh to us as Emmanuel, and made over to us in the

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covenant of grace! how bright thy glory shines in these thy works! Angels and Archangels cannot reach thy praise, "thy glory is above them." Yet the feeblest of thy ransomed Church may tune his harp to a higher note of praise than they. When I contemplate thy majesty, in the stupendous fabric of creation, what is poor, miserable man, and what this fallen world, that thou shouldest regard them with such condescending love! and, in order to rescue them from the grasp of the avenger and the curse of sin, should assume the nature of man, and visit him in his low estate with so great salvation! The Psalmist then goes on to show that the Son of God, by thus entering the tabernacle of the flesh, and obeying the law even unto the death of the cross, became inferior to the Father, touching the manhood, and even to the angelic nature. But this humiliation was a needful step to the glory of the mediatorial throne, and the universal sovereignty that should follow. The "Heir of all things" will complete the overthrow of the usurper,—take the dominion of this world from him, and "deliver the creation itself also from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. viii. 21.) Then shall the creatures that fell under the curse of the first Adam, share the blessing of the second. What-

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ever was lost shall be regained. The groans of misery shall be exchanged for hymns of praise. All animals, wild and tame, in the air, the earth, and the seas, shall be recovered from that state of "vanity," to which they were made subject by reason of Adam's transgression, and brought into harmonious and happy subjection to the rule of the Prince of Peace. All shall join the grand chorus of the universe, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

From this plain paraphrase of the psalm we now turn to the application of it by St. Paul, in opening up to his countrymen the witness of their own Scriptures to the pre-eminent glory of Jesus. After what he had said of the surpassing dignity of the person of Christ, he meets an objection which might arise in some of their minds, that Jesus had been among them as a man, and therefore inferior to the angels. Paul admits the fact of Christ's assumed humanity, but argues that such humiliation constituted the grand feature of redemption work; for that the Redeemer, dwelling amongst us as the "word made flesh," by his sufferings and death infinitely glorified the character of God, and so was crowned with glory and honour. The angels, though higher in station during the brief period of his suffering flesh (*βραχυ τι*), have done nothing to



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entitle them to the dominion over a ransomed and regenerate world; they did not re-unite in a second manhood the natures which Satan had separated; they have carried no sorrows, and borne no griefs for us: but Jesus has bought us with his blood,—he hath “died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;” and therefore to Him, as Redeemer and Mediator, King and Conqueror, shall be subjected “the world to come,” *i.e.*, the dispensation of judgment, and the glory to be revealed at his coming. This it is which gives to the second Adam the pre-eminence over angels, and obtains for Him “a more excellent name than theirs.” The apostle then confirms his argument by a reference to Psalm viii. 4, 5, 6, expounding it in the sense we have now taken, *viz.*, that the incarnation of Jesus, instead of lessening his dignity, led to a far greater display of it, in his exaltation, as the Son of man, to the dominion over all creation. Everything, in the end, the apostle inferred, is to be put under Jesus’ feet, and nothing to remain under any other authority or influence. But this (he argues) is at present an object of faith and hope: it has never yet taken place. Every one may see that the works of God are not at present “delivered from the bondage of corruption,” and brought under Immanuel’s sceptre. This, however, we *do* see, that Jesus, as

the reward of his sufferings and humiliation, is "crowned with glory and honour." He has manifested the grace of the Father, in "bringing many sons to glory," and has ascended on high, as the captain of our salvation, invested with "all power in heaven and in earth." But it remains for us to behold him in his visible kingdom, "sitting on the throne of his father David" (*i. e.*, an earthly throne), and reigning with his saints till "all things shall be subdued to him," even death itself, "the last enemy" that will yield to his conquering arm.

Such is the apostle's exposition of our Psalm; and before we turn to other Scriptures, I must say, that I can see no escape from the conclusion, that there comes a day, at the end of the present dispensation, when Immanuel, as the second Adam, will righteously complete the dethronement of the prince of this world, and be himself "set over all the works of the Father's hand;"—that He will then, in the glorified human nature, assert his title, under the covenant of grace, to the sovereignty of a regenerate world, and exercise his peaceful dominion over all creation—"All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea" (Ps. viii. 7, 8); and that every creature, rejoicing in its

deliverance, shall take up its jubilee note, and say, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

To the same precious truth all the sacred writers bear witness. Upon their unanimous testimony St. Peter grounds this exhortation to the men of Israel,—“Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts iii. 19—21); all with one mouth prophesied that Jesus Christ should go to heaven, to remain there for a set time; that when that time expire, he will come back to the earth, “in like manner as he had been seen to go into heaven,” (Acts i. 11),—the very man Jesus, whom he and the other apostles preached;—that his second advent would be marked as a time of “refreshing from the presence of the Lord,”—a blotting out of the national sin of Israel, and “a restitution of all things;” and such, the apostle adds, is the doctrine of every book in the Bible. Can we understand anything else from these expressions, than that “the offence” of Adam, including the damage

which thence resulted to all things on the earth, shall be abolished by the righteousness of Christ at his coming ; that the dominion lost shall be the dominion regained ; and that the sin, corruption, and death, which entered into the world by the first man's transgression, shall be destroyed through the perfect obedience of the second man, even the Lord from heaven !

Such was St. Peter's testimony to the Jews, whom he exhorted to "repent and be converted," that their souls might be saved. And the same ground of consolation was taken by St. Paul, when he sought to comfort the Gentile believers under "the sufferings of this present time." (Rom. viii. 18—23.) He could find no subject more fraught with practical instruction and spiritual joy, than the amazing deliverance of the groaning creation "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The Spirit was given them as the earnest of their adoption into the family of God ; and he reminds them that, by virtue of this joint heirship with Christ, they and all believers would in due time succeed to the full "adoption—to wit, the redemption of the body." In Eph. i. 14, the Apostle calls this "body," for the redemption of which the Church of God is waiting, "a purchased possession," purchased with his blood, no less than the soul ; but not yet entered

upon as to the creation. It is an inheritance decretively in possession, though not to be openly manifested till "the dispensation of the fulness of times," when God will "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." (Eph. i. 10.) The Saviour has graciously declared the forewarning signs that would indicate to his watching household the completion of these gracious designs, and the time of his return; and he adds, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke xxi. 28.) Then shall "the accuser of the brethren be cast down," and "the dominion under the whole heaven be given to Christ and to his saints." (Dan. vii. 14, 27.) I would only add here that the hope of this glorious reign with Christ on the earth, is even now the sweet cadence of their songs above. "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. v. 10.)

I necessarily omit many plain descriptions and illustrations in Scripture of the Millennial dominion of the Prince of Peace over the restored creation: some of which have indeed been dwelt upon by other brethren in very impressive words of soberness and truth; but there is a promise in Hos. ii. 16—18, which bears closely on this Psalm:

“And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name. And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely.” “The beasts of the field,” which rose in hostility against the rebel man, shall lay aside all their Satanic antipathies, and dwell in perfect harmony with man and with each other. “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fattling together; and a little child shall lead them.” (Isa. xi. 6.) The lion shall lose all his ferocity; he shall “eat straw like the ox” (Isa. lxv. 25), “but *dust* shall be the serpent’s meat.” On the serpent alone, of all creation, shall the stigma of the fall remain, a standing memento of the tempter’s malice, and perhaps a witness against those monstrous apostates who, at the close of the Millennial reign, will join the last great confederacy against the Lord and his saints.

In reference to the inanimate creation, too, I would just advert to the direct testimony of Scrip-

ture, that rebellion's blight shall be consumed by the brightness of the Redeemer's coming. The vegetable and mineral kingdoms shall smile again in the light of their Redeemer's countenance. "Instead of the thorn,"—the especial badge of corruption, "shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." (Isa. lv. 13.) Then also shall be fulfilled the pledge given by our Lord to his sorrowing disciples, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt. xxvi. 29.) So minute are the prophetic details of the restored creation, that this very expression is used in describing the abundant fruitfulness of the renewed earth. The prophets Joel (iii. 18) and Amos (ix. 13) declare that even the once barren mountain shall melt and flow down with "new wine." Truly may we say, "He that established the earth, created it not in vain;" he has "given it to the children of men," and for them shall the Redeemer "make all things new." He came "to destroy the works of the devil," and whatever Satan brought under the curse shall be an object of his merciful deliverance. The reconciliation, on the part of the Father, embraces "things in earth and things in

heaven" (Ephes. i. 10)—the fruits of the field, the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of the air,—the children of Adam and the angels in heaven; even angelic happiness is to be augmented by the redemption work of our Immanuel. They, indeed have not such cause of joy as we,—they hold forth no palms of victory gathered in the conflict of the wilderness,—they have no tears for God's right hand to wipe away,—they have no fleshly brotherhood in Jesus,—they stand not clothed in Creator righteousness; they shall be "round about the throne,"—the saints shall "stand before it." Oh, if we are of that blessed family, let us strike our harps to a higher note than theirs, and sing the new song with a louder voice, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 13.)

You will see, brethren, that I have omitted much connected with our subject; and I enter not at all on the scenes which will begin the Millennial reign, or those awful events which will usher in the kingdom of eternal glory. The dominion of Christ is an everlasting dominion, but it has, as all things else in the creations of God, its progressive stages. Now, it is the kingdom of grace. The Millennial kingdom will be a vast advance onwards towards the perfection of



glory; still it will be a preparatory, not a final, dispensation,—the dawn, but not the day of glory. All direct motives and influences of evil will be removed with Satan, and every help and inducement to holiness brought nigh by the presence of Christ, his manifested power and love, and a fuller outpouring of the Holy Ghost. The earth will be in such an improved state as we can now scarcely conceive, yet awaiting the purifying fire of the last day to attain spotless and perfect beauty. The position of the world now is, active hatred on the part of Satan, unceasing conflict in the condition of man, longing desire for the manifestation among the angelic host, and patient forbearance in our reconciled Father. But when Christ comes, He cometh “to judge the world, and to govern the nations upon earth” in a visible and glorious theocracy. It will be a day of vengeance to them that reject the Gospel,—of perfect redemption to his own faithful people. The great concerns of the family of man, in reference to all his transactions with God during this present dispensation of the Spirit shall be wound up and settled, and all traces of his great disaster obliterated. At “the end,” the rebellions of heaven and earth, and the Millennial apostates, having all subserved the glorious purposes of God, shall be put down for ever. But the Lamb shall

still sit on the throne of David, in the "new Jerusalem that cometh down from above." In the light of that city of God nations shall continue to walk on the earth, but the dominion of the Son of man shall be free from the fear of defilement any more for ever; it shall be all perfection, all purity, without any admixture of the changes of time, for "time is no more."

3. Some practical improvements.

1. We are taught by this Psalm to cultivate, by a habit of devout meditation, a holy intimacy with God. David had been meditating on the works of the Lord in creation and redemption, when his heart gave this expression to his feelings of grateful joy, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" The carnal mind cannot thus meditate on God, because it is enmity against him; its hatred springs from fear of him, its fear from unbelief, and its unbelief from ignorance. The counsel of inspired wisdom is, "Acquaint thyself with God, and be at peace." The more we can spiritually discern the mind and purpose of God, the more nearly we shall resemble Him, and the deeper will be the joy of our communion with Him. Alas! there are times when even the believer enters the sanctuary of the Divine presence with an impression of unholy fear, as if approaching an angry God instead of

Him whose name and nature is "love." Let us habitually seek to keep his Word and promise so near to our hearts that the ready expression of our lips at all times may be, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." (Psa. xxxvi. 7.)

2. Let us stir up our hearts to look more constantly and lovingly for the appearing of our Lord. With such a rich provision of grace in the wilderness, and such an inheritance reserved in the kingdom of Immanuel, what more do we need but hearts filled with his love, and constrained by his love to us (thus wondrously displayed) to "live no longer to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us." The most vivid imagination can but faintly conceive the weight of interest to us that hangs on the issues of that on-coming day of the Lord!—the full tide of joy which will overflow the waiting believer's soul, and the frantic surprise which will seize upon all who have continued, if not scoffers, yet cold and indifferent to the multiplied warnings around them, up to the moment when the seventh trumpet shall sound, and the voice of the Spirit shall say, "Behold, He cometh!" Oh, let us all settle the question now,—Who is our Master? In which of the two paths are we walking?

What is the hope that we have set before us? I speak not now to the open scoffers,—the Cains and Esaus and Judases,—probably there are none here; but I avail myself of our deeply solemn subject to say a word to the professing Christian, who, like Adam in the garden of Paradise, lives amid light and privilege. I would point to the sinless bowers of Eden for an impressive warning to us all, to live simply dependent on God, and more distrustful of ourselves. It is not enough to be decent and serious in the business of religion, we must wrestle and watch and pray lest the subtle tempter beguile us of our reward. Our strong consolation is, that He who conquered for us knows our weakness, and has promised strength equal to our day. He compares his own people in this world to lilies in a field of thorns, but our comfort is, that He Himself is in our midst as a sure defence. “He feedeth among the lilies until the day break, and the shadows flee away.” “If we have been planted in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” He died by the hand of sin once, but he now liveth by the power of the offended Judge, as a proof that the curse is wholly exhausted. He is now emphatically “the Resurrection and the life;” and that resurrection life

in Jesus not only delivers from condemnation, and secures eternal life to all who believe, but has in it a vivifying power, by virtue of which even their bodies shall be made heavenly. The first Adam was only "a living soul;" the second is "a quickening spirit;" and in the largest sense, he says to every true follower, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

3. I would add one short word on the passing events of our day. It may be in the remembrance of some, that when last I addressed this Church, I named, amongst the several marks of the time of the end, the darkening of authority, and the prevalence of popular commotion. One seems now to be dealing with prophecy, while it is merging into history. Another act of the great Revolution (perhaps the last) is now performing, and then the Master comes. It brings no terror to the waiting servant, for "the shaking of the nations" tells him that "the desire of all nations is at hand." While kingdoms are rising and falling like the waves of a troubled ocean, let our hearts' affection centre with a more intense longing on that only "kingdom which shall never be moved." It is the saints' inheritance, for they are joint heirs with Christ. "Let us comfort one another with these words." Each hour that we live they are gathering a deeper interest. "The

morning cometh, and also the night,"—a blessed morning to the children of the kingdom,—a long and dreary night to the slaves of Satan! Fear none of those things which thou mayest be called to suffer; for He who is the faithful and true witness hath said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." This is the strength of the believer's hope! Oh! may that secret of the Lord be revealed in us! May our goings be established, and our feet fixed on that Rock of ages! And then, when the day of God arrive, we shall be ready, with every faculty of our souls and bodies, to unite our voices with the joyous chorus of the regenerate creation, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

## LECTURE X.

### THE EARTH YIELDING HER INCREASE.

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RECTOR OF WATTON, HERTS.

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PSALM LXVII. 6, 7.

*“ Then shall the earth yield her increase ; and  
God, even our own God, shall bless us. God  
shall bless us ; and all the ends of the earth  
shall fear him.”*

AT first sight, my brethren, this might seem a very unseasonable subject for these times. Instead of the earth yielding her increase, we see upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. We see the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the

earth and the sea, letting loose the destructive winds in all quarters of the world. We see the prediction fulfilling, "Yet once more I shake, not the earth only, but also heaven—signifying the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made." We witness the declaration realizing, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is, and I will give it him."

How, then, can we speak now of the earth yielding her increase? For this very reason. Our Lord teaches us in all these things to see the preludes of his coming to reign in righteousness, and hence to be full of courage and hope. Thus, he says, "Then shall they see the sign of the Son of man coming with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh. When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." The shaking of things that are made, is for this very end: that "those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The tempest of the great tribulation is for the last grand ingathering of the great multitude out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, who come out of it, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.



There is, then, a special reason why we should at this very time direct the attention of the Church of Christ to that glorious light, the sure word of prophecy, shining bright amidst all the gloom and darkness of this stormy scene, and pointing out to us that blessed haven of "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

A remarkable unity pervades the whole Word of God. Its great subject throughout is the curse inflicted through sin, and finally removed by the redemption of Christ. This truth is presented in countless forms. In the words of the text one aspect of this truth appears.

When Adam fell, the sentence was pronounced, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also, and thistles, shall it bring forth to thee." When Cain had slain his brother, he was assured, "Now art thou cursed from the earth: when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength." The reversal of this curse is the great subject of my text. In the close of the Holy Scriptures, the accomplishment of this reversal is revealed in vision. "There shall be no more curse." (Rev. xxi.)

The promise refers directly to the visible fertility of the renewed earth at the time of Israel's recovery, but it includes a fuller reference to

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higher things; for the true increase yielded by any of God's works, is the revenue of praise which redounds to his holy name.

Such, then, is the promise I have to bring before you, in its widest sense. The lower creation is now made subject to vanity, because of man's sin. But in the kingdom of Christ this curse will be removed, and all God's works will yield their full increase, a tribute of unmingled honour and praise to his holy name.

Let us consider,—

1. The preparation for this increase.
  2. The increase itself.
  3. The blessing of God which will crown it.
1. THE PREPARATION FOR THIS INCREASE.

What are the means? what is the way of its accomplishment? whence does it proceed? Our Psalm is full of instruction. Consider,—

1. *Its fountain.* The free mercy of God. The Psalm begins, "God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us." Whatever the details and steps of the work of redemption, all must be traced up to this original fountain, the sovereign grace and mercy of our God. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." Let us never lose sight of this great fundamental principle of all human blessedness. "By grace are

ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." If we had been left to ourselves, we should have perished in our sins. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that showeth mercy." The eternal, free, unchangeable, inexhaustible mercy of our God, revealed through his dear Son Jesus Christ, this is the fountain-head of the blessed increase here foretold. Whether it be any present increase, or the yet larger and fuller future increase hoped for, all is of God our Saviour. The branches cannot but wither when separated from Christ the true vine. Salvation from first to last belongeth to the Lord. He gives it as it pleases Him. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

2. *The order* in which this increase is granted, may next be considered. Salvation is given to the Jew first, and then also to the Greek. The prayer of this Psalm is, "Cause his face to shine upon us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." It is the Divine plan first to choose his people and bless them, and then to make them a blessing, as we see in Abraham, the father of the faithful. It is through his Church that God blesses the world. This law

of diffusion was clearly seen in the apostles' days. God's face shone upon Israel; a pure, holy, and glorious Church was gathered from a rebellious people, and then his way was made known through the Gentile nations. The same principle is true in every revival of pure religion. The Church is quickened from on high, and walks in the light of God's love, and then mercy and salvation is spread to the world around. But all this order of divine mercy has to be yet more fully seen in what is before us: in the restoration of Israel, and its effects upon the world at large. "What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead to the world?" "He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root. Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." The Lord speedily deliver, then, Israel from abiding longer in unbelief, and speedily graft them again into their own olive tree, that their fulness may yet more abundantly be the riches of the Gentiles.

3. *The immediate precursor of this increase is the return of our Lord from heaven,—the coming of Christ to judge the earth, and reign over all nations. The Psalm calls all nations to rejoice in this. "O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth."* The wants

of mankind will gradually have a louder voice than contracted human systems have ever met. The world craves, and will crave more and more, for righteous government. The Lord has promised to supply this natural want of the human heart, though he take vengeance on his hardened enemies. Even in the coming of the Lord to judgment, goodness will finally so triumph, that the nations are to be glad, and sing for joy. Wickedness must be put down, and righteousness must triumph here below, and that for ever, and that through the presence and universal dominion of the righteous king. Thus our Lord told the Jewish people, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"—till they welcome, with hosannahs of joy and congratulation, the returning Saviour. It is the Lord judging the people and governing the nations, and all the people praising him, that prepares directly and immediately for the promised blessedness. Then shall the earth yield her increase.

Oh, with what intense desire should we long for the coming Saviour! The shaking of the nations, the distress on the earth, with perplexity, and the strange revolutions we see taking place through the kingdoms of the Roman empire, should be to us tokens of his coming, and lead us to attend to

that direction, When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and be filled with joyful hope of your near and full deliverance.

## II. THE INCREASE ITSELF.

This increase has many aspects. Let us view them in a climax of benefits.

### 1. *Natural Fertility.*

The first sentence of curse and barrenness, of thorns and thistles, was pronounced on Adam's fall, and renewed on Cain's murder. It seems to have been partially removed after the deluge, when the Lord declared to Noah, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Yet, when Sodom and Gomorrah grievously sinned against God, "he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." So, when the Israelites sinned against God, their land became unfruitful, —the law of God's providence being this, "He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein." Even now, two-thirds of our world are ocean, incapable of increase, half of the rest, and perhaps more, is almost desert, and of the remainder, the largest part is very imperfectly tilled. There is room,

even in the letter, for a vast increase, when the whole earth might become like the garden of the Lord: when beauty and loveliness might shine forth on every side: when majesty and fertility might be written on every part of the wide creation.

*2. The redemption of art.*

Its activity, its talent and discoveries, are now great and wonderful; but it is mainly turned to human self-sufficiency and vanity, and bears little fruit to God's glory and the highest benefit of man. But in the period predicted in this Psalm, every creature, when redeemed to man's use, shall be also reclaimed to God's glory. Thus we are assured of Tyre, "Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness unto the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up;" and of Jerusalem, "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord; yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." Everything that is valuable and precious shall be joyfully consecrated to the Lord's service. "All they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee,

the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." All is to be used in God's service. All the skill and invention and genius of art consecrated, and each artificer busy in yielding up every store to his glory.

3. *The redemption of science.*

Man's knowledge of creation extends far beyond his power of direct appropriation. The discoveries of science are great and wonderful already, and fill men's minds with delight and admiration, but undoubtedly far more wonderful discoveries are in reserve, and they will all be consecrated to God. Now the effect of them has too often been to minister to our pride, to puff us up with vainglory, to raise in us a fancied independence of him in whom we live, and move, and have our being, but then all discoveries, however stupendous, will only be to the greater exaltation of the mighty and only wise God, and will bring fresh revenues of praise to him, and quicken us the more to glorify his great name.

The knowledge we may attain of the depths of the earth, and of the heights of the heavens, or of the laws of animal or of vegetable life; the insight we may gain of the human body, or of the world's



history, will all be made to yield an increase of love and gratitude to the great Author of all.

4. *Society will yield its increase to God.*

There is now but little honour rendered to God on the face of human society. Men live as without God in the world, full though it be of proofs of his wisdom and love. Oh ! how little is anything of Christ seen in the family, in the market-place, in the senate, or in the council. The apostle could say, "To me to live is Christ," and where that precious name is excluded, the Christian can find little happiness. Men do not feel that their tongues and their powers of intercourse and social union are all a Divine gift, in the use of which their God justly claims a large revenue of thanks and praise. The masses of our fellow-men now speak of vanity. The fruit of their lips is too often thorns and thistles and briars ; but then society will yield its increase. Each one will stir up others to a closer walk with God ; nation will help nation in devotedness to him. "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." "The watchmen upon the Mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to

Zion unto the Lord our God." What a change when every social circle shall be a fellowship of saints, and all bent to one great purpose, the Divine glory and the blessedness of each other.

5. *The soul will yield its increase.*

The earth is only the figure of the human heart, a soil ever fertile for good or evil. Thus the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, regards it. "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." Then the thorns and briars of a crooked and perverse generation will cease. All the pride, malice, envy, hatred, strife, wars, and bloodshedding, all the covetousness, selfishness, and licentiousness, all the flagrant and enormous sins that like pestilent weeds have overspread, marred, and polluted the earth, will be cut off. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree." A Divine dignity and celestial meekness and fragrance will be revealed in the souls of God's servants. "The fruit of the Spirit, love,

joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," will everywhere bless the world. The fruits of righteousness will abound from the human race to the glory of God. Much praise, much zeal, much reverence, much humility, will distinguish his servants. Faith, hope, and love, will all be in fullest exercise. Christ will be all and in all, and every power will be consecrated to him. This is the best increase the earth yields to God.

6. *The large number of God's true servants*, thus yielding themselves to Him, is another part of this blessedness. On the earth, and in their earthly state, such servants will be multiplied. "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow, by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell." But with this is to be joined a heavenly glory in the gathering of the saints in glory

around their Lord. These will consist not only of the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed before the great tribulation, but also of that great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The increase thus of the Kings and Priests unto God, who shall reign over the earth, and of the subjects on earth, shall be a large and abundant increase.

7. *The perpetuity of this increase* has to be added to this glory. This is according to the promise made to the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, on the throne of David, and on his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever." Times of abundance are now followed by seasons of scarcity, both naturally and spiritually. Apostolic days of primitive life and beauty are followed by decline and division and decay. Seasons of plenty are followed by seasons of famine. But then there will be a perpetual increase,—no more curse, no more barrenness. The tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yields her fruit

every month. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there, and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. The Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

3. THE BLESSING THAT CROWNS THIS INCREASE.

"God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

We may notice,

1. *The certainty of the blessing.*

There is something peculiarly delightful in the lively faith which appropriates God as our portion, and then assures the blessing. This faith is founded on the covenant which God made with Abraham. "I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. I will establish my covenant between thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee." Every child of Abraham, therefore, who believed the Divine promise, might appropriate these covenanted blessings to himself.

The threefold repetition of the name of God here, corresponds to the blessing which the high

priest also gave to Israel. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Thus Aaron and his sons were to put God's name on the children of Israel, and He promised, "I will bless them."

The Psalmist here, also, to mark their sureness and certainty, doubles the expression of his faith,—“God shall bless us, God shall bless us.” Well may he do so: for heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle pass from the word till all be fulfilled.

Let us never lose hold of the delightful reality taught in the expression, “our own God.” It belongs to every believer in Christ, as much as it did to the believing Jews. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” There is, therefore, a sense in which God is the God of his people, as he is not of others. They have fellowship with him. He manifests himself to them as he does not to the world. He is the portion of their inheritance and their cup, and maintains their lot. He is their shield and their exceeding great reward; and by and bye they shall see him as He is, face to face, and find in his presence fulness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore.

To have God himself in all his wisdom and power, in all his riches, dominion, and glory; in all his truth and holiness, righteousness and goodness, love and mercy, for our own God! Oh, this is the true rest of every troubled spirit, of every disquieted heart! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." All other resources are broken cisterns; this is the sure and ever-flowing fountain of life.

*2. The nature of the blessing.*

We have seen that the increase, in its highest form, is the tribute of the creature's praise to the Creator, giving continual glory to his name. The blessing is the fresh supplies poured down from our God to recompense that tribute, and to secure its renewal and perpetuity. Fresh streams of grace, ever calling forth fresh songs of glory to God in the highest. As we may see in the beautiful pictures which the face of natural creation presents to us,—the flowers expand in beauty, and send up their lovely fragrance, as if to greet and thank the heavens above them; and the heavens send down their floods of sunlight and genial showers and refreshing breezes, to renew the earth, and call forth renewed fragrance and beauty from every landscape and every flower.

But, my brethren, who can tell all that is

included in "God shall bless us?" It is the fulness of knowledge and holiness, light and love, joy and peace. It secures all earthly good, all social bliss, all spiritual blessings, all eternal happiness. With his blessing, nothing can injure or trouble us; everything must do us good. This Divine blessing, also, secures the heavenly kingdom,—“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

3. *The participators of this blessing.*

Those who partake of it in the highest degree are the elect of God, from Jew and Gentile, in every land and from every clime. They are the bride—the Lamb's wife—the true Church of Christ. Part of this Church is now with the Lord, part is militant on earth, part is yet uncalled. When the Lord returns in his glory,—and for this we are waiting, hoping, and longing—then this Church will be complete, and the bride made all ready for her glorious Bridegroom.

The Jewish nation, converted and restored, and Jerusalem made the joy of all the earth, will be eminently blessed, as chief among the nations. The Lord Jesus Christ will reign over them, and Jerusalem be the city of the Great King.

And then the whole earth shall finally be



blessed. Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit.

4. *The moral and spiritual effects of the blessing* are co-extensive ultimately with our earth.

“All the ends of the earth shall fear him.” This is a blessing that will produce adoring love and filial reverence: the union of fullest confidence in his love, with deepest reverence for his majesty, greatness, and glory. The Psalm thus closes in this sublime thought, that the highest blessedness of the redeemed creature will be to lose itself in reverential communion with a God of love.

It is no fear of bondage or of torment; but that pure and holy, enrapturing and sublime affection, which the infinite greatness, and boundless love, and unsearchable wisdom of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, when once manifested and truly received, cannot but produce. You see it in the highest seraphs around the throne, which rest not day and night, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Happy day, when the whole earth shall be thus filled with his glory, and it shall be said, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be their God.

My brethren, these are no fancied beautiful

pictures with which a poetical imagination may delight to refresh itself; they are no political theories of a vain philosophy, which, with great swelling words of vanity, allures men through lusts of the flesh; they are solid hopes of glory to come, founded on the infallible word of the living God.

Let us gather SOME PRACTICAL LESSONS from this subject in immediate connexion with these times.

1. GOD HAS, IN HIS PROVIDENCE, VERY REMARKABLY CONFIRMED THE WARNINGS OF HIS WORD; those warnings which we have now, for many years, been giving to his Church. We have in many ways sought to impress on men's minds, the sure predictions of the shaking of everything earthly, and the great tribulation before the Lord's coming.\* I say God himself, by his own marvellous works, is confirming our testimony. God is now speaking not only in his word, but in events which ought to awaken all men, and lead them to prepare for the Lord's coming. *Even now there are many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time.* The Judas kiss of friendship will not deceive those who know how Christ has, from the beginning, been betrayed. What though a French philosopher (Quinet) tells

\* See the Author's "Divine Warning," "Signs of the Times," and other prophetic works.

us his idea of the Gospel, "that of equality and fraternity, has been the last to penetrate into social life;" or tells us after the first ages "Christianity remained pent up in the tomb till the hour of the French Revolution, when we may say, it revives, assumes a body, and allows itself, for the first time, to be touched and handled by the incredulous in institutions and the living law." And, again, "in truth the spirit of the French Revolution is to identify itself with the principle of Christianity. Amid the whirlwind of passions this idea reappears from Mirabeau to Danton; it becomes the inheritance of every party. It is the rainbow of alliance, shining forth in a shower of blood." This is Antichrist in his last form, to which the Roman Catholic Abbe (Hugonet) well responds, when in planting a tree of lawless liberty at Paris, he said, "It is now eighteen centuries since the first tree of liberty was planted on Mount Calvary, this tree watered by the blood of God."

Truly there are now arisen, as our Lord told us, "false Christs and false prophets, and they shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before."

2. Never was it more necessary than now to  
WARN MEN AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS, AND TO  
HOLD FORTH TO THE BEWILDERED NATIONS OF

THE EARTH GROPING IN DARKNESS THE WORD OF LIFE,—the true light, which discovers to them the bright Sun of Righteousness, the desire of all nations, who has come already to bless men, by turning them from their iniquities, and will come to bless the whole earth ultimately, with a truly righteous government. “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” He has already in spirit given these blessings, after which men’s souls are thirsting, to all who have truly received his salvation, and are waiting for his appearing. See in his law, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,”—the great principle of social happiness. See in his Gospel all the great desires of men’s souls realized. We need not that delusive fiction, disregarding God’s standard of right and wrong, which mistakes lawlessness for liberty, which mistakes the abasing of all that is excellent to the lowest level as equality, and which mistakes the compelling of others to adopt our private views for fraternity. We have the infallible standard of truth from the Most High God. We have the liberty wherewith the Son of man makes free,—freedom from mere selfishness,—freedom to delight in God, and love one another,—the true freedom of soul, of which no oppressor can deprive us. We have the glorious equality of being raised from the ruins

of the fall, by one redemption, to the heavenly citizenship, having all come to the Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. We have the true fraternity, as children of one Father, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is called, having one home, one elder brother, and filled with deep brotherly love to all who love him, and true ardent love to all men for Christ's sake.

Communism and Socialism are miserable substitutes for the communion of saints. There can be no universal brotherhood in rejecting God, and in casting off his law, under the pretences of infidel Socialism and Communism. It is deeply affecting to witness in the present Revolution the revival of all the falsehoods of Popery and Infidelity and lawlessness, which brought on Christendom the six vials of Divine wrath, and are now bringing the seventh and the last. The Holy Spirit predicted under the fourth vial, "they repented not to give God glory;" and under the fifth vial, "they repented not of their deeds;" and though, under the sixth vial, there has been a pause in the judgments of the Western Roman Empire for twenty-five years, during the exhaustion of the Turkish Empire, yet still there is no repentance.

3. LET US LEARN VERY CLEARLY THE FAILURE

OF ALL HOPES NOT FOUNDED ON GOD AND HIS WORD. We see already the paralysis of all trade and commercial increase, where confidence has perished, and men are uncertain under what kind of government, or tyranny, or anarchy, they shall live. Faith in the wisdom of rulers, confidence in their power to govern, and their love to their subjects, so as to seek their true welfare, is essential to the growth of industry, and that the earth may yield her increase in natural things. How much more in spiritual things! "The rod of the wicked shall not rest on the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands to iniquity." True spiritual growth is stifled by evil when it reigns, and is quickened by righteous dominion.

4. TRUE NATIONAL PROSPERITY IS FOUNDED ONLY ON NATIONAL RELIGION. Happy is the people whose God is the Lord. To attain political blessings, by exalting the sovereignty of the people, is only to realize again the first deception of man—"Ye shall be as gods." No! as Christians we renounce our own sovereignty. We acknowledge and rejoice in the Most High God, the only true Sovereign of the whole earth, the source of every other government, and are assured of the speedy appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, "which, in his time, he shall show, who is

the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Receiving this Sovereign as Lord of all, we rejoice to submit to all whom he has appointed over us. We know that our Queen Victoria reigns by the grace of God, and not by the sovereignty of the people, and we have learnt from his Word to be subject to principalities and powers; to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and to see in the powers that be the ministers of God for our good.

No other security can there be for the peace of society; and should our nation renounce Christ and his word, and embrace Antichrist, we shall deprive ourselves of the very blessings we hoped to gain. We shall forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out unto ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. God deliver Britain from that sad predicted increase! "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind!"

Oh! that we may not come under the condemnation of Thyatira, "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel (the true type of Rome), which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols!"

5. May we then be enlightened by the word

of God, and the sure word of prophecy, as a light shining in a dark place, and **BE PRESERVED BY THAT WORD FROM EVERY SNARE OF THE EVENTFUL TIMES THROUGH WHICH WE ARE PASSING.** Let us know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. We have seen how, when rulers and statesmen have been saying, "Peace and safety, then sudden destruction has come upon them." All this is but a picture of that far more tremendous day so near at hand, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. Oh! may it be true, then, of each of us,—“Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness: therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.”

Nor be surprised at the preparation for this day, in the evacuating of all earthly authorities, that have so little shown themselves valiant for his truth, and have in so many ways impeded and opposed its free circulation.

The end comes, when Christ shall have put down, abolished, or evacuated, all rule and all authority and power. No wonder, then, when we are coming near the end, we see the powers of Europe cease to be powers, and a riotous



gathering of the people overthrow in an hour a settled Government. No wonder that kingly authority is ceasing, and the public press repeats the assurance, "the cause of Monarchy is perishing in Europe," and Republicanism is prevailing, before the nations assume their last open war with Christ; when we see in the Book of Revelation that the last form of the beast, or secular Roman Empire, in Revelation xvii., is a beast of ten horns, without crowns. The signs on every side are multiplying, that this is the last state of that empire. The unclean spirits, like frogs out of the mouth of the dragon,—the beast and the false prophet, even the spirits of devils,—are working their miracles, and going forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, boasting in these wonders as changing, in an incredibly short time, the face of the European kingdoms.

"Every courier," says one of the French leaders (M. de Lamartine), on Sunday, March 26, to the Poles, "brings us victorious acclamations of people which strengthen our cause. . . . Look at Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, all southern Germany. Turn your eyes to Vienna and Berlin. The sympathizing states of Germany, the King of Prussia, are opening the doors of their citadels to your martyrs. The gates of Poland are open;

Cracow is enfranchised. The Grand Duchy of Posen has again become Polish. These are the arms which we have given you in one month."

Thus are the predicted *σημεία*, or mighty signs, working. The thirty-eighth of Ezekiel, too, is opening in providence its long-hidden meaning, and the Prince of Rhos, Meshech and Tubal, is making his voice heard among the tumultuous nations as having God on his side for his work.

Popery is everywhere throwing itself into these revolutions as if they were the perfection of Christianity. The Archbishop of Paris expresses full sympathy with the French Revolution. We read in the "Tablet," the beginning of this month, "The conduct of the Archbishop of Milan throughout the struggle is mentioned in terms of the highest admiration. That Prelate, from the commencement to the end of the conflict, shared all the dangers of the populace. His reverend figure was conspicuous, attired in pontifical robes, above the barricades, having the crucifix in one hand, and waving a tricoloured flag in the other." No wonder we see the modern phenomenon of a Liberal Pope rejoicing that his apostasy receives no damage by this Revolution. The harlot of Babylon is mounting the scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns, that she may commit

her last iniquities and come to her final ruin. All we see has been clearly foretold.

6. A brief space of trial and distress, and probably of persecution and suffering, remains for true Christians;—it is the season of the last tribulation. But may we hear and obey the cheering voice of the Captain of our salvation to his Philadelphian Church,—“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” And again, “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.” My brethren, this season is **THE MAGNIFICENT SEED-TIME, FOR THE HARVEST OF THE WHOLE EARTH.** Out of this great tribulation shall come the great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It being so, now is emphatically for us the seed-time. We may do more for the salvation of men in this time than ever we could at any previous time. Scatter, then, the seed far and wide over the whole earth, avail yourselves of every opportunity, of every opening ; in the morning sow thy

seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand. If there is to be a mighty increase, there must be a wide sowing. He which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully. Let this subject, and these times, then, stir us all up to enlarged efforts, and to more lively hope of the near approach, the speedy coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then only *shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.*

## LECTURE XI.

### THE PARTAKERS OF THE KINGDOM CHARACTERIZED.

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BY THE REV. T. R. BIRKS, M.A.,  
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PSALM XXIV. 3—5.

*“ Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”*

How striking is the contrast, my brethren, between the tumultuous changes in the world around us, and the calmness, the majesty, the unchanging steadfastness, of the word of God! When we look abroad at this moment, what a

troubled sea of interests and passions is on every side! Everywhere society is trembling, great fortunes are perishing, thrones tottering to their fall, the pillars of mighty kingdoms are cursed with rottenness, and crumble into dust. Men's hearts fail them for fear, and for looking after the things which are coming upon the earth, for the powers of heaven are shaken. But when we turn to the promises of God, all is calm and steadfast, pure and everlasting truth. The Lord reigneth, though the people may tremble: He sitteth between the cherubim, though the earth be moved. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom is that which shall not be destroyed. The floods may lift up their voice, the floods may lift up their waves; the surges of human passion may fill the world with alarm; but the Lord on high is mightier than the voice of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. His testimonies are very sure, His promises can never fail us, and every one of His righteous judgments endureth for ever. Here we may anchor our souls in safety, amidst the wildest storms of these latter days; for He hath promised His people a kingdom that cannot be moved, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

And surely there never was a louder call than at this present hour, to take heed to the word of prophecy. The last vial seems ready to be poured out upon the nations. The toes of the mighty image are breaking to pieces, as if the stone had already smitten them, and may soon become like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, before the wind carries them away. All Christendom is trembling, as with the shock of a mighty earthquake. How needful, at such a time, to be assured of a part in that kingdom which cannot be moved, of a home in that city which hath sure foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God! The inquiry of the Psalmist could never appeal with deeper force to every conscience. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?" Who are they that shall be accounted worthy to escape the coming judgments, and to stand before the Son of man? Who are they that are privileged to rise above the wreck of earthly kingdoms, the storms and tempests of these last days, and to enter that heavenly temple, where they shall receive a crown of glory, and be made kings and priests of God and of Christ for ever?

The Psalm, on which we are now to meditate, is indeed a remarkable contrast to the troubled scenes which are passing around us. We have

seen a mighty kingdom suddenly overthrown by popular tumult; but here we read of a dominion wide as the world, yet lasting as eternity, and which holds the very seas and floods under its supreme control. We have seen that the most skilful policy, the greatest military power, cannot support a throne which is based only on the sand of popular favour, when public immorality and ungodliness have caused rottenness to enter into all the pillars of the social edifice. But here we are told of a glorious kingdom, where only those whose hands are clean, and whose hearts are pure, shall be admitted to the exercise of royal authority, or allowed to stand in the presence of the Almighty Sovereign. We have heard of late the exulting and senseless cry of those who despise dominion; as if it were the perfection of a nation's glory to become a headless trunk, with no public centre of honour and reverence; as if the world's noblest hope were to resolve itself into a number of crownless and bestial empires, written all over with infidel blasphemies, where ungodly multitudes usurp that supreme sovereignty which belongs to God alone. But what a glorious contrast is here presented to us! The Son of man, the true and eternal King, surrounded by the worship of saints and angels, the object of unbounded reverence and adoration, receives the



homage of ten thousand thousand hearts, while He enters in, through the everlasting doors, to assume His rightful place on the throne of a ransomed universe! Here alone is the true hope of our fallen world, the grand remedy for human misery, the blessed prospect now in store for all the children of God. We look for a kingdom that cannot change; we expect the return of the King of kings, whose glory must endure for ever. The Monarchies and the Republics of this present world are only for a moment. God has numbered their days of power, and they are almost finished; and soon the wind must carry them away, and no place be found for them. But the King of glory, whose dominions are here described, shall reign through all eternity. If the nations rebel against His authority, He will rule them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. But His people, who know His love and behold His glory, shall be willing in the day of His power. They will surround His throne continually with their high songs of praise, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing."

Let us, then, draw near with reverence, to meditate on the simple and sublime truths which

the Psalmist here sets before us. From the wild fever of political changes and perils, let us turn to contemplate the everlasting dominion of our exalted Lord, that we may be found ready to enter in, whenever the Bridegroom shall appear. We will follow simply the order of the Psalmist, while we consider the universal dominion of our Lord and Saviour, the moral beauty and glory of those who shall inherit His kingdom, and finally, the perfection and fulness of glory in their everlasting King. May the Holy Spirit of God apply these truths with power to our hearts, that we may find them a stay and a strength in every time of trouble!

I. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Here the Psalmist ascribes an universal and supreme dominion to Jehovah, the God of Israel. St. Paul exhibits the same truth in a new light, when he quotes the same words to the Corinthian Church, and applies them to the dominion of our incarnate Saviour, the Lord Jesus. He introduces them by the solemn warning, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils;" and tells us afterward, as if to explain his meaning, that "no man can call Jesus the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

The Spirit of God, therefore, by the mouth of the holy apostle, has taught us to apply this Psalm to our Divine Saviour. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." The earth, and the fulness thereof, belongs to the Lord Jesus, whose cup we drink, at whose table we meet, and whose death we show forth continually until He come. He who has sealed the new covenant with His blood claims our world for His inheritance, and all them that dwell therein.

These words may be viewed, first of all, as a solemn warning against the creed of ungodly men in these last days. The Holy Spirit has taught us that perilous times would come, when men shall be lovers of their own selves, proud and boastful, unthankful and unholy. Many features of these times are to be seen around us. Multitudes are now ready to cast off the yoke of all authority, human or Divine. St. Peter has described them long ago in vivid colours. "They walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to revile dignities." It is these who beguile unstable souls by great swelling words of vanity; it is these who promise liberty to others, and are themselves the mere slaves of corruption. It is

these whom the Psalmist has portrayed in their loud boastings,—“Our tongues are our own; we are they that ought to speak; who is Lord over us?” And, indeed, the long abuse and corruption of God’s own ordinances must expose men, in these last times of the Church, to a strong temptation of casting them entirely away. Events confirm daily the truth of these solemn warnings, which abound in the word of prophecy. That description, once fulfilled in part in the hour of our Lord’s sufferings, will be yet more amply fulfilled on the eve of his return in glory. “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands in sunder, and cast away their cords from us.” But “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.”

What, indeed, is the true import of that vaunted maxim, the sovereignty of the people, when read in the light which shines upon us in the word of God? Sinners, rebels, guilty prisoners, under a just sentence of death; reprieved, but not pardoned; spared from day to day only through the intercession of that Saviour, whose grace too many of them openly despise, and whose

blood they trample under their feet—it is these who would wrest the sceptre of the world from the hands of their own Judge, and claim to be themselves the sovereigns, the true source of all power, the only fountain of all authority here below. They are willing, perhaps, to leave Christ the barren title of a kingdom in heaven, but all the kingdoms of the earth they claim boldly for their own possession. All earthly rulers are to reign henceforth, not by the grace of God, but by the mere will of the people, with no reference to His voice, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. Nay, but let them hear the sentence of the true and eternal King, “The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved; I bear up the pillars thereof. I said unto the fools, Deal not so madly, and to the ungodly, Lift not up your horn. Lift not up your horn on high; speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another.”

To shield us, then, my brethren, from this perilous and awful delusion of the last days, we have only to meditate, with serious thought, on these words of the Psalmist. “The earth is the Lord’s,” no less than the heavens of glory, in which

He reveals His presence. It is not the waves of the sea, however they may lift up their voice, but the Lord that sitteth above the water-floods, who is the true Sovereign. It is not a multitude, however vast, of reprieved, unpardoned transgressors, but that righteous Judge at whose bar they must all stand, who is the real fountain of all authority and power, whether in earth or heaven. It is not the tumultuous heavings of human self-will and passion, which have power to decide the fate of earthly kingdoms, but only the secret counsel of the Lord, who seeth the end from the beginning, and ordereth all things according to the purpose of His own will. He who numbered the kingdom of Belshazzar, and finished it; He, and He only, is the Judge over all earthly sovereigns; it is He alone, who putteth down one, and setteth up another. The nation that will not serve Him shall perish; yea, that nation shall be utterly consumed. O that, in these times of trouble, our Queen and her counsellors, and all the people of the land, may remember this solemn and glorious truth, that the earth is indeed the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and all they that dwell therein. May we never dare to cast aside our public allegiance to the Son of God; but serve Him with fear, and rejoice before Him with reverence; that He may prove our

hiding-place from the storm, and our covert from the tempest, when the hour of temptation shall come, to try all them that dwell on the whole earth !

But these words are not only a warning, to shield us from a fearful delusion, but also a message of hope and confidence to all the people of God. How sublime and magnificent is the truth which they reveal ! how full of peace and comfort to all those who have known the grace of the Lord Jesus ! To learn the full extent of His dominion, we must look far and wide into the universe. Our thoughts may range onward and onward through infinite space ; and still, amidst all the countless worlds that science reveals to us, we may hear the voice of the beloved disciple, saying, " All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made." We may hear the Lord himself, speaking to us by the prophet, " Lift up your eyes on high, and behold ! who hath created all these ? He calleth them all by their names, by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power ; not one faileth." But even without wandering so far, and losing ourselves in the vastness of the starry firmament, there is enough to fill us with awe and reverence, when we meditate on the dominion of our Lord here below. Yes, my beloved

brethren, the earth, and all its fulness, belongs to the Lord Jesus, the world, and all they that dwell therein. Gaze from the mountain top on the fertile plains, the waving woods, and pleasant valleys, and you are gazing only upon a small part of the dominion of Christ. Look out at evening from the lonely beach upon the stormy ocean, and every wave that you see in that wide expanse is under the control of the Lord Jesus. He speaks the word, and their wildest rage is hushed in a moment, and there is a great calm. Trace out, with the minute research of science, all the immense variety of animal and vegetable life; contemplate all the countless myriads of creatures that fill the earth with animation, and cover it with beauty, and remember, all this fulness belongs to that Lord who has died to redeem you.

All, all are under one. One Spirit, His  
 Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brow  
 Rules universal nature: not a flower  
 But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or vein,  
 Of His unrivalled pencil.  
 The beauties of the wilderness are His,  
 That make so gay the solitary place,  
 Where no eye sees them; and the fairer forms  
 That cultivation glories in, are His.  
 He sets the bright procession on its way,  
 And marshals all the order of the year.



O what a glorious field is open, in these words, to our meditations. Our duty and high privilege is to see Christ in all things, and all things in Christ. Every star in the sky may lead our thoughts to Bethlehem, that we may present an offering of praise at the footstool of our Lord. The flowers of the spring, the lilies of the field, should all whisper to us the prophet's message, how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty! We may even gaze without alarm on the wildest storms of the world's history, when we remember what an eye of wisdom is ever watching over them, what a hand of love keeps them under its perpetual control. Not only the world itself, but all they that dwell therein, the countless millions of mankind, with their fiercest passions and darkest plans of evil, are under the supreme dominion of our Lord. Surely the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain. In this confidence our hearts may well be strong; and, whatever troubles may threaten the world around us, we may still obey that joyful invitation of love. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation. Let us go into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and speak good of His name."

We are told in the Apocalypse of the witnesses of Christ, that "they stand before the Lord of the earth." How striking and impressive is this brief description! Those who would bear a faithful testimony for their Saviour in a world of sin, wherever they are, must remember His presence, and own His dominion. They must protest against the sensual blindness which would overlook His authority, and set aside His name, whether in the walks of science or in the seats of political greatness. They must read in everything here below the footsteps of His wisdom, and own Him with reverence as the Lord of the whole earth.

His are the mountains, and the valleys His,  
And the resplendent rivers,

the thrones of mightiest empires, the millions of their people, nay, even the falling sparrow, the leaves of the forest, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. May we all stand thus in spirit before the Lord of the earth, that He may count us worthy to stand openly in his presence, when He shall appear in His glory!

But a special reason is given for this claim of the Lord to entire sovereignty over the earth. "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Our thoughts are here

led backward to the first days of creation, when that voice of God was uttered, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so." How seldom, when we tread so peacefully upon the earth, do we think of this sublime decree, from whence it derives all its stability! How seldom do our thoughts rise to Him, who has set a bound to the waves that they cannot pass, neither turn again to cover the earth! Yet surely we ourselves, my brethren, in our island homes, have double cause to meditate on this truth with holy reverence. The waves that beat continually on our shores should remind us who has chained their fury, and bound them in with His everlasting covenant. Our empire, even beyond other kingdoms, owes a grateful allegiance to the Lord, for truly He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Controlled by His decree, the ocean, that might else swallow us up in one awful deluge, serves only to waft to our shores the riches of the world, and to shield our quiet homes from the violence of our fiercest enemies. O that we might learn, in every footstep that we plant on our soil, to remember the true source of all our greatness, by whom alone we have been replenished and made very glorious in the midst of the seas!

But these words contain a further and deeper meaning, on which we have a striking commentary in the events now passing around us. For the waves of the sea are a continual emblem of human passions, when they break loose from the restraints of human and Divine law, and dash fiercely against each other in wild confusion. The work of God in creation, when He established the earth amidst the waters, represents to us that higher work of His wise Providence, by which He controls the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, and causes peaceful and well-ordered societies to arise, where all would otherwise be one tumultuous waste of anarchy and lawless crime. When the prophet Daniel beheld, in the night visions, the rise of the four Gentile empires, he saw, first of all, the four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea. Here was a fit emblem of the barbarous anarchy which precedes the rise of firm and stable Governments. Social laws are like the cohesive force which binds together the solid strata of the earth; whereby every part of the landscape retains its own place and peculiar features, from the lofty mountain-top to the lowly valley, from the elevations of royal power and grandeur, down to the quiet and peaceful homes of domestic life.

In this deeper and fuller sense it is equally true

that the earth is the Lord's, because He hath founded it on the seas, and established it on the floods. When we look into the dark sea of passion in the heart of man, or study the records of past history in times of convulsion and anarchy, we may well wonder that society can move on peacefully for a single day. Can we believe that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and that millions of such fallen creatures are brought together in one society, with rival interests, conflicting passions, contradictory judgments, and all the powers of darkness busily at work, to tempt them into all manner of sin and wickedness, and not tremble at the gulf that seems to open under our feet, if the passions that now slumber in ten thousand thousand hearts were to be unchained only for a single moment? How is it, that every year and every day, for long ages past, has not brought the tidings of revolutionary violence, of bloodthirsty conflicts, and furious civil warfare? The secret is to be found in these words of the Psalmist. There is One who sits the King above these waterfloods, and knows how to restrain the fury of human passions. To Him the nations of the earth owe all their civilization, their internal harmony, and outward strength, their freedom from perpetual storms of civil warfare, the stability of their institutions, and all

the peace, the happiness, and glory which are to be found within their borders. It is not the wisdom of our forefathers, the skill of our statesmen, the activity of our police, or the strength and discipline of our armies, to which the blessing is chiefly due, or which secure their firmness and stability to the institutions of social well-being. No, it is the Lord himself, by a mightier power, and a deeper wisdom, who has founded them on the seas, and established them upon the floods. He only can order the unruly affections of sinful men, and make even the selfish passions in countless hearts, conspire in the blessed result of social peace and unity. He gives a charge to His angels, to restrain those fierce and furious winds, until the season of forbearance is ended, and the number of His elect servants is complete. But when once He removes the secret restraint, and visits the nations in His anger, the wisdom of the wise is baffled, and all the policy of the prudent comes to an end. Then the fountains of the great deep are broken up. A whirlwind of ungodly passions issues forth from the deepest and darkest caverns of the human heart, the lessons of old experience are cast aside and forgotten, and the nations are given over to delusion and madness, until they learn that the Most High ruleth among the king-

doms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever He will.

But these words of the Psalm apply even more fully to that new earth in which righteousness shall dwell for ever. The Lord, in that day, will have founded it on the seas, and established it upon the floods. He will suffer a wild anarchy to reign for a little moment, to prepare the way for Him who is the Desire of nations, the true and everlasting King. We are warned that, before He returns to assume the diadems of the earth, there will be a mighty gathering of apostates who disown His authority, and cast aside His supreme dominion. That time of trouble may even now be close at hand; and the changes that now startle our ears may be preparing swiftly for that great consummation. But O, how vain and impotent will be the rage and tumult of the people, when they dash themselves against the pillars of His eternal throne! For thus hath the Lord spoken: "Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas, and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushings of mighty waters. The nations shall rush, like the rushing of many waters; but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains

before the wind, and as a rolling thing before the whirlwind." Then, after that hour of severe temptation, how bright a prospect will open upon our world! For "behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be a hiding place from the storm, and a covert from the tempest, as the rivers of waters in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

II. After this view of the universal dominion of Christ, the Psalm unfolds the moral beauty and glory of those who share in this Divine kingdom. It is now secret and hidden; but soon it will be revealed openly. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus have the sure promise, that, "if they suffer with him, they shall also reign with him." "To him that overcometh," He has said, "will I give to sit with me on my throne." And who, then, may look forward to so high a privilege? "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place?" The Spirit of God here makes answer, in words most solemn and impressive,—“He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, that hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.” These few words contain an answer to the deepest longing of the



human heart, while they also reveal a law of unchangeable holiness, and form a blessed anticipation of the good things to come.

In the present fever, which convulses all Christendom, there is one deep cry re-echoed from ten thousand voices, and which meets our ears in ten thousand various forms. It is the cry for progress, the desire for a happier future, the longing for some bright vision of human prosperity, hitherto unknown. It is, in substance, the old inquiry of the restless worldling, "Who will shew us any good?" but clothed now with the mantle of a grave philosophy, and reared into stately and imposing schemes of political regeneration. It is the deepest instinct of the heart, the desire for happiness, rendered more intense by repeated disappointment, and gathering new strength, like Antæus, from every fall. In itself, it is right, necessary, and lawful, an unconscious craving of man after that Divine image which he lost at the beginning, and without which he cannot be really satisfied. But when misdirected, through the pride of unbelief, it becomes a fatal source of the foulest crimes and the deepest misery. Men resolve proudly to be their own saviours, and reject the salvation which their Lord has Himself procured, and which is offered freely, without money and without price. They resolve to regenerate

society by their own wisdom, but they disdain the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit of God, the only true Regenerator, and plunge blindly into the labyrinth of their own vain delusions. They are justly dissatisfied with the world, as it is, and feel that it cannot be a full and sufficient portion for their souls; but they will rather patch the tattered garment of their worldly hopes with a thousand follies, than accept the robe of a Divine salvation, and await the glorious inheritance of the world to come. Hence disappointment follows disappointment, and one abortive scheme succeeds to another; till they grow desperate in their struggle with the fixed laws of Providence, and fulfil at length that true proverb, "The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord."

But there is a progress, my brethren, which we do well to desire, and a hope for the future, which it is at once our duty and high privilege to entertain. It is true that the earth and all its fulness are the Lord's; but it is no less true that the creation is now made subject to vanity, and groans and travails in the hope of a coming deliverance. There is nothing here on which the eye of the Christian can rest with unmingled pleasure. The trail of the old serpent has passed upon every flower in his earthly paradise. Even

in his hours of purest happiness and brightest sunshine, there is a voice which whispers to him in secret,—“ Arise and depart, for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it will destroy you even with a sore destruction.” And hence, the higher the soul rises in moral, intellectual, and spiritual dignity, the less disposed it will be to sit down content with present things. The true believer, beyond all others, has the promise even of this life, and the heart-enjoyment of God’s actual bounty; yet even we ourselves, the apostle tells us, “ who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”

The words of the Psalmist are thus a guiding voice, in answer to that deep and passionate cry which now issues from the hearts of millions on every side. When they exclaim, “ Who will show us any good?” the Christian responds by the heartfelt prayer of true wisdom, “ Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!” When they inquire, with passionate eagerness, “ Who will give us liberty? who will secure ease and comfort, abundance and plenty, to the millions who are now worn with monotonous and wearisome toil?” there is here a still small voice which suggests a wiser question, and presents to

us a higher and more delightful hope than of a sensual paradise of sin,—“ Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand up in His holy place?” There is a path which the eye of the vultures of ambition hath never seen, and those fierce lions, the Nimrods of military glory, have not passed by it. It is a pathway of peace and love and holiness, which leads the immortal spirit upward into the glorious palace of the King of kings. Who desires to walk in it? Who is emulous of the high privilege, to rise above a world of sin, and to enter into that heavenly city, where all shall be purity, peace, and holy blessedness, in the presence of God and of the Lamb? Here is the hand-book, which God himself has provided, to direct their steps in their journey, and to lead them safely to that bright and everlasting home. “ He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; that hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully: he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.” To him the everlasting doors will open, and his happy spirit be welcomed into the immediate presence of his God and Saviour. A nobler progress, a happier future, than worldly hearts could ever devise, is assured to him by the oath and covenant of the

Most High. Thrones may fall, and kingdoms may perish; the hearts of men may fail them for fear, and the vain boastings of human pride be silenced for ever; but his hope is laid up in heaven, far above the reach of all earthly changes. Yet a little while and the Lord shall come, and His people shall sit down at their heavenly feast. He will then gird himself with the girdle of His own omnipotent love, and come forth and serve them; and they shall drink of the pleasures at His right hand for evermore.

O that, in these times of change, men would learn the true Fountain, where alone they can satisfy the deep thirst of their souls for progress, light, liberty, and happiness! O that they would hear the still small voice of the Spirit, pleading with them in His word! "Unless above himself he can erect himself, how mean a thing is man!" Multiply expedients as you may; cast and recast society into a thousand forms, and the truth remains unalterable, that the first man is of the earth, earthy. Vanity and vexation of spirit are his portion, and the grave his appointed home. But the Second Man, blessed be His name, is the Lord from heaven. To know Him is life and peace; to be grafted in Him is to be free and happy indeed. God himself will then

be our portion, and heaven, with all the glories of the New Jerusalem, our everlasting home. If the Gentile nations, after their long period of sensual and political debasement, would attain that glorious future for which they are yearning blindly, they must copy, in these last times, the pattern of the repentant King of Babylon. "At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned to me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation." Then only will their reason return to them, and the madness of furious passions be driven far away. Then only will honour and brightness return to them, and excellent majesty be added unto them; when rulers and subjects shall make it their highest aim to ascend into the hill of the Lord, and to stand in His holy place; when the kings of the earth shall bring their honour and glory into the New Jerusalem, and the nations of the saved shall walk in the pure light that beams from the city of our God.

These words, again, reveal to us that law of unchanging holiness, which is the foundation of the moral government of God. They are the

inspired description of all those, who shall be admitted to share in the coming glory.

It is needful, my brethren, to be jealous for the honour of Christ, and of His free salvation; but it is needful, also, to maintain the honour of the Spirit, and His work of practical obedience. No one can ever be saved unless through sovereign grace, bestowed on the unworthy; but none can ever be saved without holiness. "Let no man deceive you," says the beloved St. John; "he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he, the Son of God, is righteous." The description in the Psalm applies immediately, not to Christ, but to His people; not to the King of Glory, but to the members of His royal household. The Spirit of God expounds His own meaning. "This is the generation of them that seek him; that seek thy face, O Jacob." In other words, this is the character of all that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, who are to dwell with Christ for ever; who seek the favour of their God, and desire the presence of Christ, the true Israel. The words answer exactly to the double description of the New Jerusalem. "There shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are

written in the Lamb's book of life. . . . .  
 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city."

How weighty and solemn is the truth here set before us! For certainly none of us, by nature, can lay claim to the character here described. "Our hands are defiled with sin, and our fingers with iniquity; our lips have spoken lies, and our tongue hath muttered perverseness." The message is addressed to each of us, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness: humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord."

But when the soul has once been brought to the foot of the cross, in godly sorrow, how blessed is the change that passes over it! Once it was darkness, but now it becomes light in the Lord; and the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Faith worketh by love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. The hands are made clean. The life begins to be purified from the grosser defilements of the



world; from the anger and malice which pollute the hands with blood, and from the covetousness which defiles them with the wages of unrighteousness. The Christian has learned to smite no longer with the fist of wickedness; but to lift up holy hands in prayer to God, without wrath or doubting, while he intercedes with thanksgiving for kings and all those in authority, and for all his brethren of mankind.

Not clean hands alone, but a pure heart, is the character of all the heirs of Christ's kingdom. Such is the privilege of the true believer. By faith in the Lord Jesus, the sinner's heart is purified, and filled with all holy affection towards God and man. We love Him, because He first loved us. We love all His people for His sake; for all the disciples of the Lord are members one of another, and dear to each other for His sake, whose image they bear. We love all mankind, because our Lord has tasted death for every man, and given Himself to be a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Sin becomes hateful to us, when we gaze on His bitter agonies; and holiness becomes precious, when we see it displayed in the glorious work and spotless obedience of the Son of God. The believer gazes upon the crucified and risen Saviour, and while he gazes, is changed into the

same image. He looks for His return in glory, and having this hope, he learns to purify himself even as Christ is pure. His spirit is freed from secret guile, because he knows that his transgressions are forgiven, and his sin is covered. And now that proverb is gloriously fulfilled,—“He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the king shall be his friend.” The King of kings is Himself the friend of these His own followers; and having purified their hearts by faith in His sacrifice, He will set them among princes, and make them hereafter to inherit a throne of glory.

“He that hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” These words describe still further the character of true believers, the heirs of Christ’s kingdom, in contrast with the dissipations of worldly folly, and the treachery and deceit so fearfully common in the sober intercourse of mere worldly men. The Christian is not found in the haunts of vanity, the gaming-house, the ball-room, the theatre, and all those resorts of fashionable folly, where immortal beings contrive to kill time, by quenching their own conscience, and murdering their own souls. Instead of hankering after these dangerous and hurtful pleasures, the laughter in which the heart is sad, the countless devices

whereby men would forget their guilt by forgetting their immortality, he seeks for a purer and nobler portion. He lifts up his soul unto the Lord. His affections and desires are elevated above the troubled sea of human passion, the mists of worldliness, and the petty vanities of time, to rest upon those things which are within the veil, unseen and eternal. His thoughts rise continually to the true source of happiness, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation. And thus, while others tremble at the prospect of coming troubles, or bury all serious thought in a round of empty follies, he is privileged to join, even now, in that glorious song of the heavenly harpers, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints! Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?"

But the character of the believer is here contrasted with the treachery and falsehood of the world, no less than with its vanities. He hath not sworn deceitfully. There seems to be a secret allusion to that dark feature of the last perilous times, that men will be covenant-breakers. Where faith in God has died from the heart of nations, all reverence for the most sacred covenants will disappear. The fancy, the caprice,

the passions of the moment, whether in men or nations, will then have more force than the most public engagements, and the most solemn oaths before God and man. The slightest whisper of expediency, or the first breath of popular self-will, will then be enough to sweep aside, in a moment, the allegiance of subjects, the treaties of nations, and the very sanctions and covenant-promises of the Christian faith. In contrast to this covenant-breaking spirit of boasters in the last days, it will be one mark of all those who shall inherit Christ's kingdom, that they reverence an oath. They have not sworn deceitfully, nor ventured to use that solemn appeal to the God of truth as a plaything and formal ceremony. They remember the vow of their baptism, and they desire to be faithful and upright in all their engagements and promises to their fellow-men. In their eyes, truth and sincerity are more precious than all the gains of falsehood; and the blessing of the God of truth more highly to be prized, and more eagerly coveted, than all the riches and honours which fraud would ever secure, or this vain world could ever bestow. They are looking forward to a time when Satan, the deceiver of the nations, shall be bruised under their feet, and all liars shall have their portion in the lake of fire and brimstone; but the righteous

nation, who keep the truth, shall dwell in the presence of the God of truth, and enjoy His smile of love for ever and ever.

Such is the character of all those who are to be partakers in the kingdom of our Lord. He himself unfolds it, still more largely, in His own gracious promises. For these are the poor in spirit; the mourners, who shall be comforted; the meek, who shall inherit the earth; the merciful, who shall obtain mercy; the pure in heart, who shall see God. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and they shall be filled; they are peace-makers in a world of strife and trouble, and they shall hereafter be publicly owned as the children of God. Let us seek this holy, heavenly temper; and then, whatever troubles may come upon the earth, our happiness will be secure; for we shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation.

And these words, while they reveal the holiness of the Divine government, are also a bright anticipation of the good things to come. How blessed will be that heavenly home, where deceit and vanity can never enter; where every soul shall be clothed with immortal purity and stainless beauty; and these pure hearts, linked in closest and most fervent love, shall for ever surround the throne of their King with songs of thanksgiving!

Here we have the vision set before us of a royal household, where there is no courtly hypocrisy, no worldly pride and ostentation, no secret canker of selfishness and corruption, but all will glow with adoring love to their Almighty Sovereign, and walk in perfect love one toward another. All will have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. "Therefore will they stand before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." Oh, who would not desire to ascend that hill of the Lord, and to stand for ever in His holy place! Who would not pray for the time, when the nations of the world shall cease to follow after strange vanities, and shall set their hearts on a share in this Divine inheritance! Who would not turn his eye from the spectacle of a world, convulsed with strife and tumult, to dwell on this glorious hope, when the true King shall appear, and all the pure in heart shall be gathered into His presence; when the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; and the whole creation, now travailing in pain and sorrow, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, to share in the resurrection glory of those children of God!

III. But the Psalm leads our thoughts still

higher. It sets before us, not only the moral beauty which adorns the royal household, but also the perfection and fulness of glory in their exalted King. When He ascended on high, and led captivity captive, all heaven rejoiced at His triumph, and celebrated His assumption of supreme dominion. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory."

These words, my brethren, are a striking contrast to the infidel and ungodly theories of the last days. Man is not his own master; he has a Master in the heavens. The nations of the earth are not their own sovereigns; they are subject to the righteous sceptre of a Divine and Almighty King. Jesus, our Lord, who tasted death for every man, rose, and revived, and ascended on high, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. His dominion over all the earth, and the dwellers of the world, is a deep and unchanging reality. What though the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; what

though the message should rise up to heaven from every tribe and people, "We will not have this man to reign over us,"—the decree remains firm and unchangeable. He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. What though a harlot Church should confederate, in the last days, with an apostate people, who claim the sovereignty of the earth for their own! These may make war with the Lamb, but "the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." In that great confederacy of the last times, which the word of God reveals, there will be two mighty armies, under two opposite banners. One banner will gather around it all the votaries of human pride and self-will; and the other will assemble under its shadow all the true-hearted subjects and followers of the King of glory. Let us then beware, my Christian brethren, lest any of us be led away by the error of the wicked, ascribing all power and glory to sinful man, and thus fall from the stedfastness of our allegiance to Christ. Let us listen to that sublime invitation, which the Psalmist has addressed elsewhere to all the true Israel of God, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For



the Lord Most High is terrible: He is a great King over all the earth."

It is not, however, the bare fact, that Christ is our King, which these words reveal to us; but the blessed character of His royal dominion. He, and He alone, is the King of glory. Whatever may be the wreck of earthly thrones and empires, however wild the tumult of anarchy and earthly passions, there is a kingdom which cannot be moved, a throne which cannot be shaken, a dominion which shall never pass away. He who sits on this throne is supremely and surpassingly glorious. The sins of earthly rulers, through long ages past, shall only illustrate, by contrast, His spotless purity and holiness; and even the troubles of the last times will only reveal to mankind their need of His righteous sceptre, to calm the tempests of human passions, and establish peace and righteousness for ever. Nay, even the moral beauty which shines in the character of His most faithful servants, will only manifest the brighter excellency of their Saviour King. Their hands are clean, but only through the cleansing power of His grace. The infection of nature doth now remain, even in the regenerated; but He was without spot of sin, to make them clean from all sin, and His whole life

one unbroken course of spotless obedience. Their hearts are pure; but only through faith in His purifying sacrifice, and the secret washing of His Holy Spirit. This King of glory is infinitely pure himself, and a fountain of true and living holiness to all His people. Never once did He lift up His soul to vanity, and no guile was ever found in His mouth; but all was pure, perfect, unwearied love and compassion to the sinners of mankind. Well may His people delight to yield him their heart's reverence, and crown Him the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

This King is glorious in His power. All creatures in heaven and earth are placed under His righteous sceptre. The winds and the waves obey His voice, and hush their fury in a moment. He speaks the word, and disease and sickness flee before Him, and the spirits of darkness tremble and obey Him. The eyes of the blind are opened, the ears of the deaf are unstopped, the tongue of the dumb is loosed, and even the grave resigns its victims, and the dead are raised once more. He had power over His own life, to lay it down and to take it again. And even now, while his kingdom is still a veiled mystery, this King of glory has power over all flesh, to give eternal life unto all whom the Father hath given him. And soon, very soon, He will fulfil His promise, take to

Himself His great power, and reign for ever. Vain, utterly vain, in that day, will be every attempt to renounce His supreme authority. The warning is now solemnly given to all judges and governors here below, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled, yea, but a little." Blessed are they, and they only, who submit to His sovereign power, trust in His mercy, and hope for His appearing.

This King is also glorious in His wisdom. In vain do ungodly men "seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord," so that "their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" Surely their turning of things upside down will be only as the potter's clay. The eyes of this King are like a flame of fire, and can pierce into the most hidden secrets of the human heart. The Pharaohs and Sennacheribs, the Cæsars and Napoleons of this world, are only the axe with which He hews down the pride of rebellious nations, or the rod wherewith He smites the stubborn transgressors. When these, and such as these, boast themselves against the Lord, their true Sovereign, their wisdom is turned into folly, and their glory into shame; they are snared in the net of their own devices, and all their ungodly schemes become like the dream of

a night vision. There is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor understanding, against this heavenly King. His name is called, Wonderful, Counsellor, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God. He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to guide His people through all the conflicts and sorrows of the latter days, until they also have entered in through the gates into the heavenly city.

But, above all, this King is glorious in his love. This is the high distinction, beyond all others, which elevates Him high above all earthly rulers. "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." "He shall deliver the poor when he crieth; the needy and him that hath no helper. He shall deliver their souls from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in His sight."

What is it, my brethren, which undermines the stability of earthly thrones, and tends most to reduce mankind to a state of anarchy again? It is the wide-spread murmur of the people, when they secretly charge their own rulers with selfish luxury, and cold and heartless indifference to the sufferings of the poor and needy. Even those who are most selfish themselves will often clamour loudly for kindness and charity in others, and

foam out their reproaches against the powers which God has ordained, unless they reach their own standard of self-denying generosity. Alas! how little do they know that pride and luxury in the rich and great, discontent and fretful murmuring in the poor, are only varied forms of the same evil, and that those who are rebels against Divine Providence, if once exalted to power themselves, would prove the most heartless tyrants over their fellow-men!

However hateful the spirit, which gives birth to these reproaches, in the case of earthly rulers they have always some partial truth. Even where their regard for their subjects' welfare is sincere and genuine, it must ever fall short of that high standard of God's perfect law, which finds a response in every conscience. There is one Ruler alone to whom the reproach cannot apply, even Jesus, the King of glory. His love is deep and boundless, His self-denial wonderful and glorious, His condescension infinite and unspeakable. It was love to a world of sinners that brought Him down from the throne of glory to agony and the cross, and now that He is ascended on high, and the everlasting doors have opened and received Him, that love continues still the same, unsearchable and unchangeable. It is love that keeps Him back so long from appearing openly to

claim the kingdom. It is not that He is slack or careless about His promise, but that He is long-suffering to those who still persevere in rebellion, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And when He shall appear as the King, and sit on the throne of His glory, it is love that will give the signal for His appearing. He will arise to judgment, that He may save all the meek of the earth. It is when the cry of His martyrs, how long! waxes louder and louder in His ears, that he will arise for the oppression of the poor, and the deep sighing of the needy, and the Lamb that was pierced and slain for guilty sinners, will manifest His wrath against the rage of the persecutors, and appear as the King of glory, and reign for ever.

Let us then, my brethren, in these times of change and trouble, fix our thoughts and hopes on the coming of this glorious King. The heathen may rage, and the kingdoms be moved; troubles and sorrows may gather around the Church of Christ; but still be sure that the earth is the Lord's with all the fulness thereof, and that Jesus, our risen and exalted Lord, is the true Sovereign of the world, the King of glory. His people when they meet in His presence, will be all righteous, but He alone is the King of righteousness and peace. Their robes shall all be white

and spotless, but only because they have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They will be all glorious in the beauty of holiness, but still their glory will be as nothing compared with the goodness and beauty of Him whom they worship, and to whom they offer their allegiance as the King of kings. They are the dewdrops of the resurrection morning, but He is the Sun of Righteousness, who fills them with light, and makes them radiant with His own beauty. May it be ours, in these conflicts and dangers of the last days, not only to retain our faith in Him, as our only Saviour, but to hold fast the honour of His name, as our Master and Lord, the true Prince over all the kings of the earth! He will then fulfil to us that gracious promise to all those who have not denied His name, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which is coming upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown!"

## LECTURE XII.

### THE GLORIOUS MAJESTY AND PERPETUITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

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PSALM CXLV. 10—13.

*“All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.”*

YOUR minds, my dear Christian friends, have been directed, for the last few weeks, to the most solemn subject which can occupy the attention of an immortal soul.



Year after year have I assembled you together at this season, to meditate upon the coming of our still absent Lord. I believe we have all felt the importance of the lectures; but I am sure no course has been of so solemn a character as that which I am permitted to bring to a close this evening. Many things have tended to this result. Your minds have been more accustomed to the questions which have formed the matter for the discourses. There has, therefore, been less excitement and more scriptural investigation: there has been less curiosity and more simple desire for instruction. The very remarkable times in which we are living, have been an additional call upon our attention. These could not fail to produce feelings, I will not say of anxiety, but of the deepest solemnity. For if the Scripture tells us we are not to be troubled when we hear of wars and rumours of wars, for that these things must come to pass, though the end is not yet,—still our Lord says, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Joyful as that event will be to the Christian, joyful as the anticipation of that event is to every assured Christian,—still it is a solemn thought, that the precious will soon be separated from the vile, and that we shall be ushered into the imme-

diate presence of our great God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, there to receive our place in the kingdom. May God of his mercy grant, that we may not even seem to come short of that rest which remaineth for the people of God !

The Psalm, a portion of which I have read as the text, might well furnish abundant matter for more sermons than one. I might occupy your time by speaking of God's present dealings with his people, and showing you how the Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. I might speak of God's providential care of all his works, reminding you that "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." But we must confine our attention to the particular thesis appointed for our consideration this night. THE GLORIOUS MAJESTY AND PERPETUITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

In addressing you on this point, I purpose to do three things. FIRST, *scripturally to set forth in what the majesty of this kingdom will consist ;* SECONDLY, *to prove from the same source the perpetuity of this kingdom ;* and, THIRDLY, *to endeavour to apply the subject practically to your hearts and consciences.* May the Holy Spirit be present amongst us this night, and solemnize our minds ; may He "take of the things of Christ,

and show them unto us," and enable us all more clearly to realize the promised glories of the coming kingdom !

1. In what does the majesty of Christ's kingdom consist ? I may commence by referring to the *greatness of its extent*. "Before the foundation of the world, God purposed in himself," says St. Paul, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." The kingdom of our blessed Lord, therefore, is to extend over all others. Those kings who would not obey him, shall obey him ; those rulers who took counsel against him, shall bow down before him. All the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ. This was the subject of covenant, as you will find, in Gen. xxii. 18 : "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This has never yet been altogether fulfilled. True, all who come in contact with the Gospel, even though they do not receive it into their hearts, benefit by its softening and benevolent doctrines. The Jew benefits by the spreading of Christian truth, and as we have heard, his name is ceasing to become a by-word. The Infidel, though he thinks not of it, really benefits by the tone throughout the social

system, which is itself the result of the precepts of the Gospel. The Heathen are treated with great consideration, and their rights respected, in proportion to the purity with which the Gospel is received by those who visit or colonize their distant shores. Still, how little is the extent, compared with the richness of the blessing when the Lord shall be universally acknowledged as King of kings and Lord of lords. Then when all kingdoms shall be brought under his sway, "He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This kingdom, in its extent, is distinctly prophesied of by Daniel: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Dan. ii. 44.) And again, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii. 14.) And again by Zecha-

riah, "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." (Zech. xiv. 9.) Well, therefore, might the Psalmist exclaim, as in the language of the text, "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

2. The majesty of this kingdom will consist in *the glory of its subjects*. Then shall the dead saints be raised, and the living saints changed, and both shall have bodies like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. It is then that we shall realize that beautiful language of St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the

last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

What a different view does this give us of death! We may hope, then, that many of us may escape that means of changing our vile bodies; for there are always certain painful feelings, at least in imagination, connected with this change. But if not, we learn this, Flesh and blood cannot inherit the glorious kingdom. The subjects must be glorious, they must have glorified bodies; and death is the appointed preliminary change for all, prior to the advent of the Redeemer.

Nay more, *all creation is concerned in this glorious kingdom.* In Heb. ii. 7, we read, "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." We must, however, here bear in mind, that certain distinctions will be made between those of the saints who shall have especial privileges with their King and Lord, and those of the world, who shall only be subdued at the advent. There is, you will see in Rev. xx., at the close of the millennium, a further outbreak of Satan and his agents. It is clear, therefore, that there will be some of those on earth during the millennium, who, though restrained by Divine power, are not converted by Divine grace.

This does not, however, interfere with the statements just now made. The kingdom is a

perpetual kingdom, of which the millennial kingdom is only one form ; the perfect consummation being reserved until the thousand years are completed.

Connected with this part of the subject is the *glory of the city*, which I may speak of as the metropolis of Messiah's kingdom. Of its glories we find mention made in Rev. xxi., but the greatness of its glory is most clearly but briefly expressed to us in the name which shall be given it, as we read in Ezek. xlvi. 35. The name of the city from this day shall be Jehovah-Shammah, "The Lord is there."

I proceed, then, in the next place, to call your attention to the *glory which shall then be bestowed on Christ*. In that beautiful and touching prayer offered up by our blessed Lord, previously to his crucifixion, and which we find recorded in John xvii., He thus prophetically pours out his heart (verse 24), "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Jesus was "in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He shared in all his Father's glory—he divested himself of this : in his love for sinners, who,



without such a Saviour, were eternally lost, he "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but who, for the joy that was set before him, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Again shall he appear on this earth in all his glorious majesty, to take to himself his kingdom and reign; then will he see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; then will his prayer be answered for the real and manifested unity of his people; then will the world believe that he is the sent one, and the anointed one of God. His people shall behold his glory, and he shall be admired in all them that believe.

Now, indeed, the enemies of the Lord, I will not say triumph, but vainly imagine they can laugh down spiritual religion. They scoffingly inquire, what is meant by vital piety, ridicule the name of saint, deem earnest prayer, and the expectation of an answer to it, to be the result of enthusiasm, and look more for success in this world, to the carrying out of political principles, than to obedience to the Scriptural commands of the Lord. Now there is, comparatively speaking, much of the form, but little of the power, of vital godliness. But this shall not always be. If, during the early part of this dispensation, the casting out devils by the Spirit of God was evi-

dence that the kingdom of God had then in a sense already come, how much more plainly will the binding of Satan constrain men to acknowledge the King of kings and Lord of lords. Then, indeed, "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He that went forth "conquering and to conquer" shall then see his complete victory. The very angels of God shall worship him; "and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 12, 13.) To this glory the believer is constantly looking. If we are his people, we shall see it and share in it. "Beloved," says St. John, "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall

be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The Lord himself has said, "I know their works, and their thoughts. It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory." (Isaiah lxvi. 18.) Well, then, might the Psalmist prophetically exclaim, as in the text, "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power."

Again; we may remark, in connexion with the observations just made, that *the glory of Messiah's kingdom will, in a great measure, arise from the presence of Messiah himself*. Thus, in Rev. xxi. 22, St. John says, "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." We must not here suppose that our blessed Lord is always on earth, or that his occasional withdrawal of his personal presence is in any wise to interfere with the statements here made. The occasional absence of any one of ourselves from our own house by no means militates against the truth that our own house is our residence. In the same manner, the kingdom and

the throne of his Father David may be spoken of as Christ's, though from time to time he may be hidden from our eyes.

Again, let us observe that *this glory is to be shared in by the people of God*. It is a very delightful thought that our blessed Lord has now gone to prepare a place for us, and that he will soon return that we may be where he is, and that we shall see him as he is, and be for ever with the Lord. But the Scripture tells us more than all this. It assures us that we shall be partakers of his joy: for instance, in Matt. xxv. we have the parable of the Talents; in the twenty-first verse we find the man who had travelled into a far country returned and reckoned with his servants, and, addressing those who were faithful, he said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." This is the privilege to which St. Paul alludes in 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, "We are bound," says the Apostle, "to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What wonderful changes shall then take place! In these days we hear that the rich are getting excessively rich, and that the poor are getting excessively poor. But the poor will in that day find that the Lord knew them, and watched over them, and though he had decreed that the poor should never cease out of the land, yet that he "had chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him." Now, we see again and again, the ungodly flourish in things temporal, in health and wealth, in strength and honour, but then God will make known they are but vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, while, on the other hand, he will make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory. Now we see God's people a tried people, a suffering people, a persecuted people, but so was their Master before them, and why? "Ought not Christ to have suffered, and to enter into his glory?" Yes, and his people know that it is "through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom;" but their consolation is, that "if they suffer with him, they shall also reign with him." For, as we read in Dan. vii. 27, "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,

whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

It is not impossible that *special privileges* will be granted to the apostles, and that while the people of God in general partake of the joy of their Lord, the apostles shall have special honour, for our Lord said (Luke xxii. 29), "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Nor must we omit to notice *the knowledge which shall be vouchsafed to man in that kingdom*. In these days we often boast of our acquirements, of our increase in scientific knowledge, of the rapidity with which knowledge is spread abroad; but look at the gross darkness which envelopes large masses of our fellow-creatures. I speak not of the want of power to read or to write; I allude not to any ignorance of the things of this world, but to the ignorance of God, which leaves men a prey to the tactics of any designing knave, and to the ignorance of the things which concern our everlasting peace. I might speak of our masses in the mining districts, some of whom, alas, have never heard the name of our God, except in connexion with some blasphemous expression. I might take you to an infidel class which abounds in our metro-

politan and manufacturing districts, who, under the name of philosophy, falsely so called, think they manifest their wisdom by rejecting the wisdom of God, even the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; but how much darkness and practical Infidelity is there in a higher and better educated class! What notions of the way of salvation are entertained by those who might know better! Mixing up salvation by works and salvation by grace,—explaining away plain precepts of God's word,—denying the doctrine of God's particular providence,—repudiating the blessed and comforting truth of God's answering prayer. But then this shall cease for ever. Even Christians are now constrained to say, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;" for in the day of our Lord's Advent, "the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Thus will be exactly fulfilled the language of the text, "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts and the glorious majesty of his kingdom."

We must now proceed to investigate the second part of the subject, involving matter of much greater difficulty, namely, "How LONG WILL

THIS KINGDOM ENDURE ?" My answer is, " FOR EVER."

Such, at least, is the language of Scripture, expressed both negatively and positively.

In Isaiah, for instance, chap. ix., vers. 6, 7, " For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever."

Again, in Luke i. 32, 33, " The Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

St. Paul, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, quotes from the Forty-fifth Psalm, as applicable to the Saviour, " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

Ezekiel also, speaking especially of the Jews, says, chap. xxxvii. 25—28, " They shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and



their children's children for ever : and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. . . . And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

In Daniel ii. 44, we read, again, " In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

And in Daniel vii. 18, we shall find that this perpetuity equally affects the saints, for the prophet says, " The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."

I do not think it necessary to quote more passages : those which have been read are sufficiently explicit. The only question is, how the expression "*for ever*" is to be interpreted.

In a work well known to many of my hearers, "The Investigator of Prophecy," there is a very able article on this subject. The writer comes to this conclusion, that though there are three different senses in which the expression "for ever" is used, yet that there is nothing vague or uncertain as to the particular sense in which those words are to be applied ; and that nothing

short of a literal eternity is intended in passages such as those to which I have referred.

I would here remark, that *the perpetuity of the kingdom was to be expected*. God, at the close of His creation work, pronounced over all things that he had made, that they were very good. We have heard, in the course of these sermons, that as by the sin of the first Adam the excellence of creation passed away, so by the coming of the second Adam, the excellence of creation is to be restored. Scripture confirms this, for St. Peter says, that "God will send Jesus Christ, which before was preached, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

The difficulty which exists upon this topic appears to have arisen from erroneous views of that place in which we are to live throughout eternity, and from the interpretation of one or two passages of Scripture. I say, that the difficulty has arisen from erroneous views of the place for enjoying everlasting life. What is the place for eternal life? Surely not a place of ethereal blessedness,—not a place of clouds, to be driven hither or thither by the wind. It is the place where the Lord himself will be. It is a place without sin and without sorrow and

without pain. It is a place of endless joy, of increasing knowledge, and of unspeakable glory. But there is no reason why earth should not be that place, and there are scriptural reasons for supposing that earth *will* be that place. Therefore, St. Peter plainly says, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Moreover, let me refer you to the language of Isaiah xlv. 18: "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." By whom was the earth to be inhabited? Surely not by man in his fallen state,—a prey to his own evil passions, a bond-slave of Satan. This world, once pronounced to be so very good, now so manifestly under the curse, was never meant to be inhabited by man fallen. When Christ says, that he "rejoiced over the habitable parts of the earth, and his delight was with the sons of men," he refers to something very different from that which now is. When the apostle says, Rom. viii. 18—23, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature

waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," he must have been thinking of something better than this earth as it is now, and something different from the usual interpretation of heaven. He sees by faith the spoliation of the strong man armed; he sees Satan defeated on the very place which once he had thought to have secured for himself as his own dominion. Creation will rejoice at the return of the Lord, and by its holiness, prosperity, and joy, be manifestly under the dominion of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

But there is one passage of Scripture in which we must confess there is involved very considerable difficulty. I am sure that many of you have anticipated the text to which I refer, 1 Cor. xv. 24, where reference is made to the delivering up

the kingdom. "Then cometh the end," says St. Paul, "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

If this text contradicts the theory of the perpetuity of Messiah's kingdom, then, of course, all speculation upon that point must be at an end.

I apprehend, however, that the difficulty may easily be solved. The kingdom of Christ is *one and perpetual*, but though perpetual, it is yet progressive. It appears to have three different forms, and that the one form gradually, but surely, opens into another, a larger and more glorious form. The Father has now given all power unto Christ, both in heaven and earth, as our blessed Lord tells us in Matt. xxviii. But as he himself also tells us, "He will come again in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels." Or, as in the parable of the pounds, the nobleman that went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, should return and occupy the throne. This is the millennial kingdom,—a larger manifestation of the Saviour's power and majesty than any we enjoy at the present time. The thousand years being fulfilled, then cometh *the end*, and the kingdom shall be

delivered up ; in other words, the mediatorial throne will be resigned, and *God* shall be all in all. My reverend brother, who addressed you on the last occasion, in his most able and interesting work on Daniel, thus comments on the difficulty now under consideration. I quote his words in preference to using my own, as I feel that he is indeed a master in Israel upon these most interesting and difficult points :—

“ We must remember the various attributes and titles which meet in our Divine Saviour. He is perfect God and perfect man, in two distinct natures and in one person for ever. As very God of very God, He is one with the eternal Father ; and as man, he is one with his redeemed people. But he is also the Mediator between God and a fallen world. In the fulfilment of this office, He vailed for a time his Divine glory, and though truly God, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant. Therefore he will also hereafter, as Mediator, exercise for a season a peculiar dominion, till all enemies shall be subdued under his feet. The era of the peculiar sovereignty will be the Millennium, or the day of future judgment. As God, he will share for ever in the supreme worship and dominion rendered to God the Father. The throne, which

is surrounded with eternal adoration, is the throne 'of God and the Lamb.' As man, he will also enjoy an everlasting dominion, to be shared with his people. But the peculiar dominion which he holds as Mediator will cease. When death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, its purpose will have been completely attained. The God-man will then resign that special dominion which he has held during the time of judgment. Thenceforth, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, he will share in his Father's glory; and as the Son of man, he will never cease to exercise visible sovereignty over a ransomed universe. 'He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end;' or, as the text says, 'Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.' "

These words which I have just read, at least show that there is nothing inconsistent in the view for which I argue, of the perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ; but until we can fully understand the distinction between the person of the Father and the person of the Son *before incarnation*, and reconcile this distinction with the *unity* of the Godhead, it is in vain to attempt to answer satisfactorily and clearly to our limited reason, all the questions that may be asked con-

cerning the relation of the Son with the Father *after the Millennial kingdom.*

I will now, as the Lord may help me, endeavour to apply the subject practically to ourselves. May the Holy Ghost bless the word to our souls' health, for Christ's sake!

First, then, *let me warn you against being merely listeners, and not doers of the Word.* Theology as well as geology may be studied as a science, interesting in itself, exciting to the intellect, but unprofitable to the heart. We may have all knowledge; but this will not and cannot save us. If the kingdom is a glorious kingdom, it is also a holy kingdom; and without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Preparedness is then essential for every one of you. It has often been said, Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Examine, then, yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith. St. John gives you the best test of the power of this doctrine upon the soul. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure." Is this purifying process going on in you? Do you feel that your eye is becoming more single? that you are thinking more of the glory of



Christ, and less of the honour of man ? that you are aiming more to exalt Christ, and less to exalt yourselves ? In a word, that you are Christ's, for they that are Christ's have crucified the world, with its affections and lusts ? My brethren, if these Lectures are not accompanied by God's blessing, so as to work in you this purification, be assured a most solemn responsibility rests upon you ; yea, they will rise up in judgment against you. Many there are who have never been led to think on these things. Their hearts and their heads have been led to the glories of this world ; but of the glories of the kingdom they have no knowledge. No wonder, then, that as the potsherds of the earth they strive and contend for very trifles ; but it is unseemly for you, it is a manifest proof of your unbelief, if, hearing of these glories, and professing to wish to partake of these glories, you are found to do no more than others, and are to be seen living in all the carelessness of the unconverted. I cannot help feeling that our Lord will upbraid those congregations, as he did the cities of old, wherein his mighty works and future glories were specially published, and who refuse to repent. The Lord give you his Holy Spirit, that ye may prepare to meet the great God, and our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ !

*Secondly, let me entreat you to beware of*

*worldliness.* The doctrine of the Second Advent is, I am convinced, the greatest enemy to worldliness; but worldliness is the great hindrance to the right reception of the doctrine of the Second Advent. Men, in the midst of a career which has for its great end present gratification, cannot bear to hear of the day approaching when all such things shall be pronounced to be lighter than vanity. They reject the future, because it interferes with their love for the present. And in proportion as you suffer worldly enjoyments, be they pleasures, be they honours, be they wealth, or whatever they may be, to occupy your mind and affections, in the very same proportion you will find the sanctifying and exalting influence of this glorious hope diminish. Remember that catalogue of saints recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, of whom it is said, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises; but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country,

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that is, a heavenly : wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."

If, then, the hope alone has this purifying power, what will the enjoyment do for us? Take heed, then, of the cares of this life; if you are overcome by them, and that day come upon you unawares, your attendance at these Lectures will only add to your condemnation.

Thirdly, I would say to you, *Cultivate heavenly affections*. Realize more and more the glorious majesty of the kingdom of Christ. Meditate on that glory of which you may be a partaker; and ask yourselves two questions,—Are you already meet for the inheritance? and, again, Are you seeking, by all the appointed means, to become meet for it? If not, brethren, search boldly into the reasons. You do not deny the excellence of that incorruptible inheritance. What, then, prevents you having the joyful and assured hope of participating in that inheritance? The Lord has himself said, "He that believeth on him hath everlasting life." Believe in him, and ye shall have perfect peace. For God will "keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on him." Do not try to satisfy yourselves with saying a man may be a Christian without knowing it. A man ought to be a

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But mark well, dear brethren, you can have no just cause for taking comfort from this glorious theme, you can have no well-founded hope of taking part in the first resurrection, unless you now benefit by the death of Christ. To the cross you must look, before you can look for the Crown. Jesus rose again to justify those for whom he died—Jesus ascended into heaven, and pleads for those for whom he died—Jesus will come again, and give his reward to those for whom he died. God grant that we may all be so made partakers of the death of Christ, that we may also be partakers of his resurrection, so that finally, with the residue of the holy Church, we may be inheritors of Christ's everlasting and glorious kingdom !

And now, brethren, permit me to remind you that *there are persons who still declare these subjects are not practical*. I conceive that they are *most* practical, and, I may add, especially in these times. Is the view correct that the end is approaching? Is it *possible* that these views are correct? Is it *possible* that many of you may see the Lord's appearing without ever passing through the grave? Then I solemnly charge you to look to yourselves. I speak to many who are wealthy, many who occupy a high worldly station, and I ask them to reflect upon the account they must give in that great

day. How striking are the words of the prophet, (Jer. xxii. 15, 16,) "Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord."

Look, my brethren, at the luxuries of the rich at these times, while the money for the Christian instruction of the poor is found wanting. I speak not of works of art, or the produce of the manufactory, for I remember the number of hands which find employment in their production. But I speak of the food which is wasted to surfeit the body of the epicure. I speak of the unprofitable labour which is encouraged, and the vice which is sanctioned. I speak not, perhaps, of any of my hearers, but of those in the same station of life as they, who can expend their hundreds on their opera-box, while they cannot or will not find their guinea for the Ragged-school. I speak of those who, crying, "It is nought, it is nought," beat down the hardly living tradesman, who in turn is compelled to grind down the starving operative. I speak of those who advocate the heathenish morality of 'every man for himself, and God for us all,' and

spurn the scriptural precept, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."

Oh! I would, my brethren, that your rich relations, your worldly friends, would hearken to St. James, who cries aloud, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." "Be wise now, therefore, and be instructed. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath be kindled but a little."

But if this subject ought to speak practically, and I may say alarmingly, to the rich, I am sure it ought also to speak to the poor, especially to any who are discontented. Do I say your lot is not painful? Alas! I know it is painful. Do I say that your bodies do not suffer, or that your minds never are justly grieved at the neglect and want of sympathy with which you meet? I acknowledge all this. I know the heart of the parent who sees her daughter under-paid and over-worked, gradually sinking into the grave, while she contributes to the finery of the fashionable world. I can feel for the noble spirit of the father crushed, as he witnesses his child the victim of the foul seductions of the libertine. I can enter into the grief of the

husband, as he returns from seeking in vain for work to his breadless home and starving family. But I cannot sanction discontent. Many a saint has had such trials, but the result has been a closer walk with God, a prayerful longing for that time when there shall be the glorious manifestation of the sons of God—when the Lord shall bid the Lazaruses arise from their graves, and enter into that place where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Yes, brethren, not a groan is uttered on account of your present taskmasters, but it is heard in heaven—not a sorrow is felt, but for which there is sympathy in Christ. Then fear not. Tarry thou the Lord's leisure, "for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Brethren, I will not stay to enlarge upon the remarkable times in which we are living. The time of our salvation is nearer than when we believed, if the love of many is waxing cold. "May the Lord of his infinite mercy increase our love more and more one toward another, and toward all men, to the end he may stablish our hearts, unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

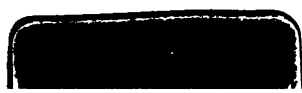


But I will only add, that there is one subject connected with these views which deserves special mention. They still provoke the ridicule of the worldly and unconverted. Perhaps if the immediate dangers of the present times to our land pass away, and you from careful and prayerful comparison of the signs of the times with the word of God boldly avow your belief that the Lord is at hand, you will find this scoffing language abound. Fear not. Be not ashamed of your Saviour and your King. This scoffing is only another proof of the accuracy of God's word. Be not thrown off your guard. Be not less watchful. Be not induced to disavow your belief in the suddenness and the nearness of the Lord's Advent. Man may revile you. He reviled your King and Master before you. The disciple is not above his Master. But recollect this, there is a crown laid up for you, and not for you only, but for all who love the Lord's appearing. May God of his rich and free mercy bestow that Crown upon all of us, for his dear Son's sake!

THE END.







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